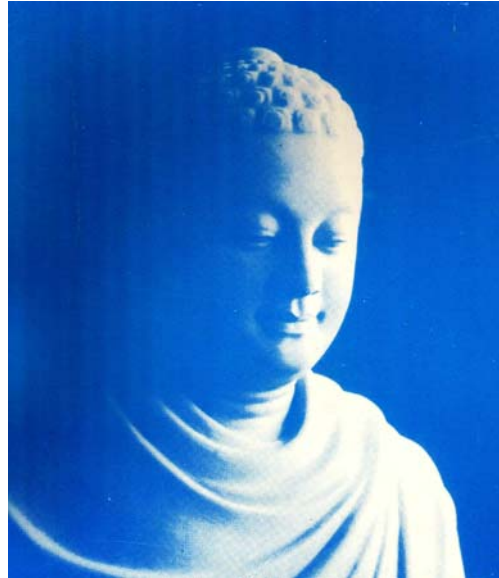


**A PENETRATING STUDY INTO THE  
TEACHINGS OF GOTAMA BUDDHA**

**COMPILED BY**

**YOGAVACARA RAHULA**

**THE WAY TO PEACE AND HAPPINESS**  
**A Penetrating Study Into The Teachings Of Gotama Buddha**



**Notes:**

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### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

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Since then he has been living at the Bhavana Society, a forest monastery/meditation center in West Virginia. He conducts retreats integrating Yoga breathing and exercise with vipassana meditation in the USA, Germany and elsewhere from time to time.



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*May any merits acquired from the combined efforts of this work go towards creating peace and harmony among all beings.*

*Bhikkhu Yogavacara Rahula*

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# FOREWORD

This book has been compiled in order to give the reader a thorough familiarization and understanding of the underlying principles and aspects of the Teachings of the Buddha Gotama. The Teachings rendered here are mainly those from the Pali tradition of Buddhism, which are acclaimed to be the direct oral Teachings given by the Buddha Gotama in India some two thousand five hundred years ago. These Teachings were memorized by his direct disciples and later written down in the Pali language in which the Buddha spoke. Today these Teachings are still being widely read, honored and practiced, especially in the countries of Thailand, Burma, and Sri Lanka. And now also they are gaining recognition and popularity in the western countries because of their evident practical significance and application in our daily lives. These Teachings are termed the Theravada, the Word of the Elders.

Included herein is only a selection of suttas or discourses from the original sermons which the Buddha gave directly or which were delivered from memory by some of his saintly disciples. These discourses were delivered to monks and laymen who gathered together to listen, or to individuals who asked for them specifically, or to those whom they happened to meet on their foot-travels across the length and width of India. In the forty-five years of spreading his wonderful, mind-healing wisdom the Blessed One, as the Buddha was called by his devotees, and his enlightened disciples, brought peace, harmony, and happiness to innumerable beings, both human and otherwise.

The Teachings concern practical, daily life for the laymen as well as for the monks, those who abandon worldly home life to give their heart and full time to practice. They describe the various elements of existence which constitute the life of living beings, aspects and subjects of contemplation, reflection and meditation, and guidelines for wholesome living.

**THE WAY TO PEACE AND HAPPINESS**  
**Foreword**

In the first part of the book the elements which comprise the central and pivotal ideas and the fundamentals on which the practice of Buddhism is based, are presented in detail. In the second part the actual way of life and how to practice skillfully the “Way to Peace and Happiness” are also described in many ways. To reveal the nature of the mind, an appendix has been added, being a detailed and penetrative study into the mental processes involved in our sense experiences. Also several other useful extracts which shed a different light on the subject are included to aid in deepening one’s understanding. And finally an insight meditation exercise is given for those who would like to begin meditating but do not have access to a suitable teacher. It is only through actually tuning one’s awareness to the present moment of experience that insight and direct knowledge gradually unfolds.



# INTRODUCTION

*Bhikkhu M. Punnaji*

Buddhism is what was taught and practiced by the greatest Sage that India ever produced, Siddharta Gotama, the Buddha. Strictly speaking, it was not his teaching but the eternal truth rediscovered by him. Buddha is not the name of a person but a title meaning Awakened-One.

Some take Buddhism to be a religion; others regard it as a philosophy. If we carefully examine the earliest records we would see that it should best be described as a psychology or even more appropriately, a psychotherapy. It does deal with religious as well as philosophical, social and individual problems, yet it does so by first bringing them into the field of psychology and solves them as psychological problems. Buddhism is also not a kind of mysterious mysticism as some understand it because even mystic states are understood in Buddhist psychology to be just different altered mental states. Nirvana, the ultimate aspiration of Buddhists, is not a mystic state but a state in which the mind is purged and purified of all ego conceit and all traces of attachment/greed, aversion/hatred, and delusion.

Buddhism offers its own critique of religion. In this, religion is not theocentric, centered around the idea of a creator god, but rather sees it as being centered around the interest of man. Religion is not something that has come down from heaven to fulfill a divine purpose, but something that has grown up on earth to satisfy the deepest of human needs. It is not based on divine revelation but on human discovery. It is not dependent on blind faith and worship but on the understanding of experience through the use of human intelligence. It is not based on history or a story which if proved false would tumble down, but stands on the hard rock of direct personal experience. The practice of religion is not based on the idea of punishment and reward but on selflessness and love, nor is it following the commandments of the creator, but basing one's actions on a feeling of responsibility for oneself and others.

Buddhism does not regard man as a sinner who is incapable of anything better than appealing to the creator for forgiveness. It regards man as capable of rising above all human weaknesses and cultivating a divine mind through his own efforts. One cannot be saved by any external means but he has to save himself through his own efforts and right technique developed by his mind. *The Buddha is not a savior but a guide who teaches the technique of saving oneself after having tested it himself.* The destiny of man is not controlled by the whims of a creator, but by the kind of life he leads, his thoughts, speech and actions in accordance with the law of cause and effect. One's state of mind even determines the situation in which he is reborn. The Buddha taught about rebirth but not in the reincarnation or the transmigration of permanent souls. The life after death is only a continuation of the present process of existence. The Buddha realized that our existence does not begin with this human life nor end with this life in some kind of eternal heaven or hell afterwards, but he beheld that we have been existing since beginning-less time in countless numbers of various existences according to our accumulated Kamma and will continue to do so until the whole process is understood and gradually brought to a standstill. Buddhism is a gradual path of mental evolution, where man transcends human weaknesses and attains perfection of mind and finally solves the problem of existence, attains Nibbana.

All problems in life boil down to one psychological problem called Dukkha or suffering. Suffering is not just poverty, starvation and sickness and so forth which modern man commonly talks about. It is more related to mental suffering in the form of confusion, anxiety, depression, grief, worry, restlessness and so forth which are mainly psychological states. Normally these states of mind are considered to be the fault of circumstances. This is why these are seen commonly as economic or social problems. Yet the Buddha points out that they are caused by our mental attitudes and reactions to circumstances, not by the objects or situations themselves. If we really check up inside our mind we will find this is true.



This suffering is understood in Buddhism to be the clash between ourselves and the world around us. To put it in other words, it is the clash between our desires and reality. This means that suffering is caused by unrealistic desires. Reality frustrates these desires in most cases so we wish that reality were otherwise. Our desires are insatiable. The real cause of our suffering is the unrealistic desire, not the reality that frustrates it. The real cause of the economic problem is not the absence of means to satisfy our endless wants, but the presence of these insatiable wants. So the solution of our problems in life is the eradication of these unrealistic desires which clash with reality and frustrate us and cause us unhappiness. In other words, we have to awaken from our world of dreams and come down to reality, to face and accept reality as it is. This is why Buddhism is not an other-worldly religion or a kind of escapist asceticism but a this-worldly and down to earth realism. Nibbana is not an escape into a trance state of mystical bliss, but rather perfect sanity which goes beyond the so called normality that is itself insanity, from a Buddhist point of view.

To understand Buddhism we have to understand ourselves, as it is merely a description of ourselves. What has to be done is not to examine the pages of old worn out texts, though this may be useful at the outset to find out where we have to go; nor do we have to make long excursions into outer space or make complicated mathematical calculations. The Buddha's Teachings are like routes on a map which help us to journey through the labyrinths of our own mind. When the mind is understood we have understood everything. The Buddha said, "The world, the beginning of the world, the end of the world, and the path leading to the end of the world is right here in this fathom-long body with its perceptions and consciousness."

The person who understands in this way need not worry about the problem of an after life. Buddhism is not a worry about circumstances here or hereafter, but a concern about mental states here and now. If we look after the present state of mind, the future will look after itself. Nibbana is a state of being which the mind is purified of all clinging, craving, aversions, ego-conceit, and ignorance here and now, not a trance or life after death. If Buddhism is understood and practiced by mankind, this earth would

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**Introduction**

become a place of harmony and happiness; happiness not through plenty and power, but happiness through desire-less-ness and wisdom.



## CHAPTER I

# WHAT THE BUDDHA DISCOVERED

“Buddhi” in Sanskrit means the “pure intellect,” the mind which is free from the conditioned influence of the emotions so that no biased or prejudiced observations or deductions are construed. The minds of most people operate under all kinds of biases and perversions so that all of their perceptions and thoughts are tainted and conditioned to function in set patterns. In this way they can never perceive things in their true nature. The power and scope of their mind remains limited and confined. The Buddha, the Awakened One, was one who had freed his faculty of intellect from all distortions in order to clarify it to the greatest possible degree. From that point he was able to develop an acute awareness and insight into how the mind and body function together. As his insight deepened he discerned the why and wherefore of the mind and body and all the phenomena related to them. Through his perfected insight the Buddha saw the complete cycle of cause and effect, the law of Kamma as it pertains to the elements of mind and matter, and directly experienced how it operates. He saw that the root cause of the suffering and unhappiness which living beings experience is rooted in their own mind. By cultivating awareness and acquiring control over the operation of the mind a person can alter, eliminate, and destroy those root causes which bring misery, sorrow, and frustration in his life. He can create and develop other root causes which will bring about the gradual and eventual ending of all sorrow and confusion. He would then be free from all doubts, regrets, remorse, anxiety, and restlessness which would disturb his well-being; he would be an inspiration for others and be able to help them effectively.

That is exactly the teaching and practice which the Buddha first discovered for himself and then, out of great compassion, explained and methodically offered to the world. The Buddha was the great doctor of the mind who cured his own mind of the great disease — ego/conceit. He was also able to expound and describe in detail the cure by which any person

could likewise purge his mind of the great affliction called “Ego,” and of all of the attendant sorrow, pain, and grief which inevitably accompanies such a disease. So an appropriate title for those Teachings which are called Buddhism could well be termed “*The Way to Peace and Happiness.*”

The Buddha was born the son of a king and queen, and he grew up among all the pleasures and luxuries of a royal court, but he abandoned them all in order to seek the Noble Quest as described by him in the Ariyapariyesana Sutta as follows.<sup>1</sup>

These, monks, are the two quests: the noble quest and the ignoble quest. And what is the ignoble quest?

As to this, monks, someone himself being liable to birth, aging, decay, dying, sorrow and stain, he seeks what is likewise liable to birth, aging . . . stain.

And what, monks, would you say is liable to birth, aging, decay, dying, sorrow and stain? Sons and wives, monks, are liable to these conditions. Women-slaves, men-slaves, goats, sheep, cocks, swine, cows, elephants, horses, gold and silver are liable to these conditions; yet this man, being enslaved, infatuated, addicted, himself being liable to birth, aging . . . stain; he seeks happiness in what is likewise liable to these conditions.

And what, monks, is the noble quest? As to this, someone himself being liable to birth, aging . . . stain, but having seen the peril in what is likewise liable to these things, he seeks the Unborn, the Undying, the uttermost security from the bonds — Nibbana. This, monks, is the noble quest.

And I too, monks, before my “Awakening”, while yet unenlightened, being myself liable to birth, aging, decay, dying, sorrow, and stain, I also sought happiness in what was likewise liable to those conditions.

Then it occurred to me: Why do I, being liable to birth, aging . . . stain myself seek what is likewise liable to these conditions? Suppose that I . . . having seen the peril in what is likewise liable to birth . . . should seek the Unborn, Undying, the uttermost security from the bonds — Nibbana.

Then I, monks, being a seeker of what is good, searching for the incomparable, matchless path to peace, walking on tour through Magadha, in due course arrived at Uavela, the camp township. There I saw a delightful stretch of land and a lovely woodland grove, and a clear flowing river with a delightful ford, a village for support nearby. It occurred to me, monks, “Indeed, it is a delightful stretch of land . . . indeed this does well for the striving of a young man set on striving.” So I, monks, sat down just there, thinking: “Indeed this does well for striving.”

So I, monks, being myself liable to birth, aging, decay, disease, dying, sorrow, and stain, having seen the peril in what is likewise liable to the same, sought the Unborn, Undying — Nibbana. Knowledge and vision arose in me: “Unshakable is freedom for me, this is the last birth, there is no more again becoming!”<sup>ii</sup>

## THE NOBLE TRUTHS

### THE FIVE AGGREGATES OF CLINGING

The Buddha set forth in his Teachings, which collectively are called the Dhamma (Sanskrit: Dharma), that which he directly perceived and realized to be true and common experience of all living beings. He explained his discoveries and taught them in what he called the Four Noble Truths. They are termed “Noble” because, if understood and practiced to the full, they lead one to experience and life in a purified, calm state of mind. This is a state of unsurpassed, unalloyed peace and happiness which none of the passing vicissitudes of life can disrupt. Following are some of the Awakened One’s own discourses which set it forth.

Monks, there are these Four Noble Truths: The Noble Truth of suffering,<sup>iii</sup> the Noble Truth of the arising of suffering; the Noble Truth of the ceasing of suffering; and the Noble Truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering.

And what, monks, is the Noble Truth of suffering? Birth, aging, sickness, pain, sorrow, lamentation, grief, despair, and death are suffering. Not getting what one desires and coming into contact with the undesired is suffering. In short, it is the five aggregates of clinging that are suffering. What are the five?

All forms or material shapes (rupa)<sup>1</sup>, whether it be past, present or future, internal or external, gross or subtle, inferior or superior, far or near — that is called the aggregate of form.

Every feeling (vedana)<sup>2</sup>, whether it be past, present, or future, internal or external, gross or subtle . . . that is called the aggregate of feelings.

Every perception (sanna)<sup>3</sup>, be it past, present, or future . . . that is called the aggregate of perceptions.

Every mental formation (sankhara)<sup>4</sup>, be it past, present, or future . . . that is called the aggregate of mental formations.

Every moment of consciousness (vinnana)<sup>5</sup>, be it past, present, or future . . . that is called the aggregate of consciousness.

These five, monks, are called the five aggregates of clinging.

And what, monks, is the Noble Truth of the arising of suffering? It is that craving [for the five aggregates]<sup>1</sup> which leads back to continued rebirth, suffering . . . along with the lure and the desire that lingers longingly now here, now there — namely the craving for sensual pleasure, the craving to exist forever, and the craving for life to end. This is the Noble Truth about the arising [and continuation]<sup>2</sup> of suffering.

And what, monks, is the Noble Truth of the ceasing of suffering? It is the utter passionless cessation, the giving up, the forsaking, the extinction, and the release from this craving. This is the Noble Truth about the cessation of suffering.

And what, monks, is the Noble Truth about the way [to live and think] that leads to the cessation of suffering? It is this Noble Eightfold Path, to wit: Right View, Right Thought, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration.

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<sup>1</sup> In quoted suttas, the words in brackets are those of the compiler.

<sup>2</sup> Same as the above footnote.

This is the Noble Truth about the path leading to the complete ending of suffering.

These, monks, are the Four Noble Truths. Wherefore an effort must be made to realize [through meditation]: This is suffering. This is the arising of suffering. This is the cessation of suffering. And this is the path leading to the cessation of suffering.<sup>iv</sup>

As stated above, the Noble Truth of Dukkha, or suffering, is quite evident as far as the physical symptoms of birth, aging, sickness, decay, and death are concerned. But how do these five aggregates of clinging, which the Buddha mentions, relate to being the Dukkha, or suffering, itself? These five aggregates of clinging are the elements which comprise the body and mind of sentient beings, and based on these five “factors of existence” arise all the different kinds of material and mental phenomena which exist in the world.

These five elements of matter and mind, which the Buddha has elaborately detailed as being inflamed and bound up with suffering, are themselves the things that are involved and which undergo the birth, aging, sickness, decay, disappearance, sorrow, and confusion. With penetrating insight the Buddha discerned that that to which living beings attach and identify themselves are these very five “elements of a being”, regarding them as “mine”, “myself”, or “my soul”.

The first, the aggregate of matter, consists of all the material manifestations which are the objects of sense cognition. These include the physical body and all material objects in the world — visible objects, sounds, smells, flavors — any sense stimulus whatsoever of a material nature. All forms are compounded and derived from four primary modes, or characteristics, which matter can assume. These are: **the earth element**, which is experienced as being solid — hard or soft and having extension or occupying space; **the water element**, which is experienced as being liquid or fluid and having cohesive properties; **the fire element**, which is experienced as different ranges of temperature — hot and cold — and which functions in the maturation or ripening process; and **the air element**, which is

experienced as motion or pressure, and allows the movements of the body parts.

These four primary elements are the constituents of the human and animal body, and the various ways in which they combine produce the various parts with their peculiar characteristics and functions of maintaining bodily life. All four elements are inherent in each manifestation of matter, but one is usually predominant and stands out over the others so that the object is said to be or exhibit that particular characteristic.

The following is part of a discourse by the Buddha to his only son, Rahula, describing these elements which make up matter.

*Earth element*: “Whatever, Rahula, pertains to oneself as an individual, is hard, of a solid nature, and an object of grasping, to wit: hair of the head, hair of the body, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, kidneys, diaphragm, liver, spleen, lungs, stomach, intestines, excrement, brain, or anything else whatsoever in oneself that is hard [or soft], of a solid nature and an object of grasping or clinging, this is called the internal element of earth. But even this personal earthy element, as well as the external earth element, this is merely the element of earth.”

*Water element*: “Whatever, Rahula, pertains to oneself as an individual, is liquid, of a fluid nature and an object of grasping or clinging, to wit: bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, tears, saliva, nasal mucous, urine, or anything else whatsoever in oneself is liquid, of a fluid nature, and an object of grasping, this is called the internal element of water. But even this internal water element, as well as the external water element, this is merely the element of water.”

*Fire element*: “Whatever, Rahula, pertains to oneself as individual is hot [or cold] of fiery nature, and an object of grasping, to wit: that whereby there is deterioration, intense burning, fever, digestion or anything else whatsoever in oneself that is hot . . . this is called the internal element of fire. But even this internal fire element as well as the external fire element, this is merely the element of fire.”



Air element: “Whatever, Rahula, pertains to oneself as an individual, is gaseous, movement, of an airy nature, and an object of grasping, to wit: the ascending and descending airs, stomach gas, pressure in the bowels, inhalation and exhalation, movement of the limbs, or anything else whatsoever in oneself that is gaseous . . . this is called the internal air element. But even this internal air element as well as the external air element, this is merely the element of air.”

Space element:<sup>v</sup> “Whatever, Rahula, pertains to oneself as an individual, is void, of an empty or hollow nature, and an object of grasping, to wit: the cavities of the mouth, nose and ears, the inside of the stomach, intestines or bowel, or anything else inside the body that is void . . . this is called the internal element of space. But even this internal space element as well as the external element of space [the enclosed space in a house, a rubber ball, a glass or cup], this is merely the element of space.

“These five elements, Rahula, in accordance with fact and with perfect insight, should be regarded thus: ‘This is not mine; this I am not; and this is not my self.’”<sup>vi</sup>

In other words, whenever a person feels these elements of solid, liquid, heat, motion, or space in his own body, the picture or idea of a body arises in the mind and he immediately thinks about it as belonging to and affecting “him.” Therefore, because of his taking it for “self,” it does come to affect him (such as pain, etc.) and disturb his mind. Rather, one should regard those cognitions as being just these modes of behavior and nothing more. One should not think and conceive them as pertaining to oneself. If one does insist on clinging to these “characteristics of matter” and grasp them as “self,” belonging to his body, then he will have to suffer whatever consequences they bring.

Knowing this, having seen with perfect insight that such is the case, a wise person becomes less identified with these elements and detaches his mind from them; he becomes free from their overwhelming influence.

Another aggregate of grasping at phenomena is vedana-khandha, the group or factor of feelings or sensations that arise and pass away continually in the body and mind whenever there is sensory impingement.

Monks, there are these six seats of feeling: feeling [pleasant, painful, or neutral] that is born of contact with the eye; feeling born of contact with the ear; feeling born of contact with the nose, with the tongue and with the body [skin]; and feeling that is born of contact or cognizing mental objects [memories, dreams, hallucinations, ideas, thoughts, etc.]. That is called feeling. From the arising of contact is the arising of feeling; from the ceasing of contact is the ceasing of feeling.<sup>vii</sup>

These feelings are only conditioned, habit-reflex mental reactions which arise on account of sensory impingement or contact. It is these feelings or sensations constantly arising and vanishing in the body and mind that cause the craving or attachment for certain objects, the aversion or hatred towards others, and indifferent or neutral reactions to the rest. People who are unaware think it is the object itself that they crave. When it is seen closely however, it is actually the conditioned, habit-reflex element of feeling which the object stimulated the mind to re-create. So, it is this mental activity of feeling to which they react, not really the object itself.

We must understand these feelings and sensations that are continually arising and passing away in the body and mind, and see how, really, they are the main thing which keeps the mind whirling on its insatiable quest for sensual gratification. It is like a monkey swinging through the forest among the trees, grasping one branch after another as he moves swiftly along. So do beings continually grasp the sensations which arise due to delusion and attachment.

We must develop an attitude of detachment and equanimity toward these feelings, knowing that they are impermanent, continually changing, conditionally arising, and without substantial self-nature. They are not our possession and they are the potential source of most of our frustration, confusion, and sorrow. We are not able to have the pleasant sensations at

will, and we are subjected to the unpleasant ones, also not under our control. If we train the mind to remain equanimous when they arise, not desiring or avoiding, then we can be free from their binding influence.

The body is like a skinned cow; wherever she stands, she will be subject to ceaseless attacks by the insects and other creatures living in the vicinity, just as a man is helplessly exposed to constant excitation and irritation of sensory impingement crowding upon him from all sides, through all six senses.<sup>viii</sup>

The third aggregate of clinging is *sanna-khandha*. This consists of the perception or recognition of visible objects, sounds, smells, tastes, bodily impressions, and mental objects. A perception is the “mark” or peculiar characteristic of a thing or the memory of an object — how it is normally pictured and recognized. These perceptions are also conditioned, habitual, reflexive mental reactions which arise on account of sensory contact, just as do the feelings and sensations; hence, “What one feels, that one perceives.”

The fourth aggregate of grasping and clinging is *sankhara-khandha*.<sup>ix</sup> This consists of the mental formations and latent tendencies which the mind creates and with which it becomes involved in regard to the objects with which it comes into contact. These mental activities, again, are conditioned habitual, reflexive reactions which the mind spontaneously produces, and they include the newly formed volitions and other activities of mind as well. These *sankhara* are the result of our past actions (*kamma*) of body, speech, and thought, and on which present and future thoughts and actions are based. They are actually the “stuff” of the mind from which all mental activity and corresponding bodily activities are conditioned and develop into habits.

Some of these mental factors are: intention, attention, one-pointed-ness of mind, awareness, contact, initial thought, sustained thought, interest, desire to act, energy, decision, kindness, sympathy, anger, greed, ignorance, ill-will, envy, egotism, worry, doubt, dull-ness and laziness, shame, fear, scrupulousness, and so forth. There are said to be fifty mental factors

included in the aggregate of sankhara. Some of these arise all the time, in each sense experience, and some arise only occasionally whenever the proper conditions are present, according to their function and habitual exercise. By use and repetition they gain strength to affect our thinking and actions. It is these sankhara which we must understand and recognize by our experience and learn to control, for it is from these that all of our personal weal and woe arise.

The fifth aggregate is vinnana-khandha, or consciousness itself. There are six kinds of consciousness which arise, named according to which of the six sense organs is contacted and stimulated. It is only when the appropriate conditions are present that consciousness or awareness is able to arise.

Monks, consciousness is generated by conditions; apart from conditions there is no manifestation of consciousness. It is because of the appropriate condition arising that consciousness is known by this or that name. If consciousness arises because of the eye coming into contact with a visible object, it is known as eye-consciousness [seeing]; if consciousness arises because of ear and sounds, it is known as ear-consciousness [hearing]; if it arises because of the nose and odors, it is known as nose-consciousness [smelling]; if it arises because of the tongue and flavors, it is known as tongue-consciousness [tasting]; if it arises because of the body and touch objects, it is known as body-consciousness [touching]; and if consciousness arises because of the cognition of mental objects, then it is known as mind-consciousness.

Monks, as a fire burns because of this or that appropriate condition or fuel, by that it is known. If a fire burns because of sticks, it is called a stick-fire; if it burns on cow-dung, it is called a cow-dung fire; if it burns on rubbish, then it is called a rubbish-fire.

Even so, monks, when because of a condition appropriate to it, consciousness arises, it is known by this or that, namely — eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind-consciousness.<sup>x</sup>

“It should not be understood that there are six separate consciousnesses, each one connected with its respective sense organ. It is merely the role of

the sensory activity of consciousness which plays within the realm of the six sense-spheres.”<sup>xi</sup>

This consciousness is not owned by, nor is it under control or direction of, any permanent entity, such as an eternal individual “self” or “soul.” Consciousness, or awareness, is merely a habitual, reflexive phenomenon of mind caused by the stimulation by a sense object of its respective sense organ, just so it is for feeling, perception, and the sankharas. If there is no stimulation or contact, or if the sense organ is impaired, then this “consciousness of object” is not able to arise. That is because of its soulless nature and its dependence on other factors. It is this phenomenon of consciousness which most people take to be their “self,” or “soul,” or such. The illusive notion of an individual, separate “I” has developed because of ignorance and craving, and has strongly attached itself like a parasite to each moment of consciousness.

“Consciousness is not the subject to which objects present themselves, but it is merely the ‘presence’ itself of a particular object.”<sup>xii</sup>

A discourse by the Buddha’s close disciple, Ananda, given to an inquirer, describes the soulless nature of consciousness.

“Is it possible, friend Ananda, just as this body has in diverse ways been defined, explained, set forth, and opened up by the Blessed One as being without a ‘Self’ or ‘Soul,’ is it possible in the same way to describe consciousness, to show it, make it plain, expose it as being without a ‘Self’ or ‘Soul’?”

“It is possible, friend Udayin. Owing to the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue, the body or the mind, and from contact with their respective objects, consciousness arises, and not otherwise. Does it not, friend?”

“It does, friend Ananda.”

“Well, friend Udayin, it is by this method that the Blessed One has explained, opened up, analyzed, exposed and proclaimed that this thing called consciousness is dependently arising without a ‘Self’ or ‘Soul’ in the entire six-fold sphere of sense. So beholding consciousness as such,

an ardent dwelling disciple is attached to nothing in this world, nor does he yearn for other worlds. He is un-troubled and hankers after nothing, and he is of himself set utterly free, and he realizes, ‘Destroyed is all reason or impetus for rebirth. Lived is the Holy Life, done is the task, for life in these conditions there is no hereafter.’”<sup>xiii</sup>

Following are two questions from *The Questions of King Milinda*. A certain King Milinda asked the Arahant Nagasena some questions concerning the soul.

“Nagasena, is there such a thing as a Soul? Is it the ‘living-principle’ within which sees forms through the eye, hears through the ear, smells with the nose, tastes with the tongue, feels with the body, and cognizes mental objects with the mind, just as we sitting can look out of any window we wish to look?”

“O King, it is by reason of the eye and forms that sight arises and those conditions — contact, feeling, ideation, thought, abstraction, sense of vitality, attention, and so on. Each arises simultaneously with its predecessor’s passing away. A similar succession arises with each of the other senses when they are brought into play. These phenomena are not united one to another indiscriminately, the later sense to the former organ, etc. So herein, there is no such thing as a Soul.”

“These three, Nagasena, perception, reason, and the Soul that exist in a being, are they all different, both in letter and essence or are they the same in essence, only differing in the letter?”

“O King, recognition is the mark of perception and discrimination is the mark of reason, and there is no such thing as a Soul in a being.”

“But, if there is no such thing as a Soul in a being, how or what is it then which sees forms with the eye, hears sounds with the ear, etc.?”

“If there be a Soul (distinct from the body) which does all of those things, then, if the door of the eye were shut or the eye torn out of its socket, could it then stretch out its head as it were through the larger aperture and with a greater range, see forms more clearly than before? Could one hear sounds better if the ears were torn away or smell better if

the nose were cut off, or the tongue torn out could he taste better, or feel touch better if the body were destroyed?”

“Certainly not, sir.”

“Then, O King, there can be no such thing as a Soul inside the body.”<sup>xiv</sup>

Following are a number of discourses by the Buddha to his followers concerning the five aggregates of clinging.

If monks, the eye that is internal, or the ear, nose, tongue, body, or the mind that is internal, is intact and the appropriate external object impinges upon one of them, and there exists in the mind tendencies (sankhara) reacting towards the impingement, then the appropriate consciousness of eye, ear, nose, etc., is thus able to arise. Whatever is material shape in what has thus come to be, that is included in the aggregate of material shapes.

Whatever is feeling or sensation in what has thus come to be, that is included in the aggregate of feelings. Whatever is perception in what has thus come to be, that is included in the aggregate of perceptions. Whatever are the mental formations . . . that is included in the aggregate of mental formations. Whatever is consciousness . . . that is included in the aggregate of consciousness.

Thus, there is the including and the coming together of these five groups of grasping. These are generated by conditions. Whatever among these five grasping groups is desire, sensual pleasure, affection, infatuation, catching-at, that is the uprising of ill (Dukkha). Whatever among these five groups is the control of desire and attachment, the non-existence of desire and attachment, that is the ceasing of ill.<sup>xv</sup>

A certain monk addressed the Blessed One as follows:

“Lord, are these the five aggregates of clinging, to wit: the material aggregate, the feeling aggregate, the perceptions aggregate, the mental formations aggregate, and the consciousness aggregate?”

“That is so, friend, those are the five aggregates of clinging as you say.”

“But, Lord, these five aggregates of clinging, in what are they rooted?”

“These five aggregates of clinging have their root in desire.”  
Then that monk asked again:

“Now, this same grasping, Lord, is it those five aggregates or is grasping something apart from those five groups?”

“No indeed, friend, this same grasping is not those five groups, nor yet is it something apart from them. But where there is desire and attachment, there is also grasping.”

“May it be, Lord, that in the five aggregates of clinging there is a variety of desire and lust?”

“It may be so, friend. Herein, one thinks thus: ‘May I be of such and such a body in the future [may I experience different objects of sense]; may I have such feeling, such perception, such mental formations; may I have such and such consciousness in the future.’ In this way, friend, in the five aggregates of clinging, there may be a variety of desire and lust.”

“What, Lord, is the condition, what is the cause, for the arising of the material-aggregate, the feeling-aggregate, the perception-aggregate, the formations-aggregate, and the consciousness aggregate?”

“The four great elements [earth, water, fire, and air] are the condition, the cause for the arising and designation of the material-aggregate. Contact is the condition, the cause for the arising of the feeling-aggregate, the perception-aggregate, and the formations-aggregate. Name-and-form is the condition, the cause for [it is the object of] the consciousness-aggregate.

“It is well, Lord, but what is the ‘individual-self view’?” [How does the notion of an individual self or ‘person’ arise?]

“Herein, friend, the untaught, common folk, unskilled, unpracticed in the Dhamma, regard the body as their ‘self’, or their ‘self’ as having body; or they regard the body as being in their ‘self’ or their ‘self’ as being in the body; and in the same way they regard feelings, perceptions, mental formations and consciousness. They regard these phenomena of mind as being their ‘Self.’ . . . That, friend, is how the ‘individual-person view’ comes to be.”

“It is well, Lord. And how, Lord, is there no ‘individual-person view’?”



“Herein, friend, the well taught Noble disciple, skilled and practiced in Dhamma, does not so regard the body, feelings, perceptions, mental formations, and consciousness as being his ‘self.’ . . . He regards them as: ‘This is not mine, I am not this, and this is not my Self.’ This is how no ‘individual-self view’ comes to be.”

“It is well, Lord.”<sup>xvi</sup><sup>3</sup>

“Those recluses and Brahmins, monks, who regard the ‘self’ in many diverse ways, regard it as the body mass of the five aggregates of clinging, or as someone of these. Thus this is the view; it has come to him to think ‘I am.’ Now when it has come to someone to think ‘I am,’ there comes to pass a descent of the five feeling faculties of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and touching. Consciousness is the result, mind states are the result, and delusion is the result. Touched by the feeling born of contact, tainted with delusion, there comes to the untrained person the view, ‘I-am.’

Owing to a cause, monks, comes the conceit. ‘I am,’ and not otherwise. And what is the cause?

Owing to body, owing to feeling, perception, mental formations, owing to consciousness it comes, and not otherwise.

Suppose that a woman or a man or a young lad, fond of self adornment, should gaze at the image of his face in a mirror that is clean and spotless, or in a bowl of clean water. He would behold the image owing to a cause and not otherwise.

Even so, through the cause of the body, the feelings, perceptions, mental formations and conscious-consciousness, comes the conceit. ‘I am and not otherwise.’

Just as a dog, tied with a leash to a strong stake or post: if he moves, he moves towards that stake or post; if he stands still, he stands near that post; if he sits down, he sits close to that post; if he lies down, he does so close to that post.

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<sup>3</sup> The reference ‘Samyutta Nikaya XXII §2 (Volume III)’ stated in the endnote XVI does not reflect this address. The right reference may be Samyutta Nikaya XXII §82. (Noted by Dhammavamsa)

Similarly, the uninstructed, unpracticed, ordinary person looks upon the body as, ‘This is mine, I am this, and this is myself’; he looks upon feelings, perceptions, mental formations, and consciousness as, ‘This is mine, I am this, and this is myself.’ If he moves, he moves towards these five; if he stands, if he sits, if he lies down, he does so close to these five aggregates of clinging. . . .

Just as a dyer or a painter, with dye or paint, and a well-smoothed wooden panel or wall or piece of cloth, can reproduce the form of a woman or man, complete in every detail; similarly, the uninformed untrained, common person brings body (and sense objects) into existence too; he brings feelings, perceptions, mental-formations and consciousness into existence too [by grasping and clinging to them.]

“The venerable Radha said to the Blessed One: Lord, ‘a being, a being,’ one is called. In what respect, Lord, is one called ‘a being’?”

“Because of being caught and held fast by that desire, that attachment, that infatuation, that delight, that caving for the body [and sense objects], for feelings, perceptions, mental formations and consciousness; therefore is one called ‘a being.’

“Just as, Radha, when little boys or girls are playing with mud pies, as long as they are not rid of attachment to those mud pies, are not rid of desire, affection, thirst, excitement, and craving for those mud pies — then so long do they delight in them, are amused by them, value, and cherish them. But as soon as those little boys or girls are rid of attachment and desire, are rid of affection, thirst, excitement, and craving for those mud pies, they stop playing with them, scattering them by hand and foot.

“In the same way, Radha, do you stop playing with the five aggregates of clinging, scatter them. Practice so as to end the craving-attachment for them. Indeed, Radha, the ending of craving is Nibbana.”<sup>XVI</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> The reference ‘Samyutta Nikaya XXII §2 (Volume III)’ stated in the endnote XVI does not reflect this address. The right reference for this is Samyutta Nikaya XXIII §2 (Volume III). (Noted by Dhammavamsa)

Whatsoever recluses or Brahmins, who remember a number of their former lives, they all remember one or another of the five aggregates of grasping, saying: “In the past I had this sort of body,” and thus remembering, it is just the body he remembers. “In the past I had this sort of feeling, this sort of perception, this sort of mental formation, this sort of consciousness.” Thus remembering, it is just feeling . . . consciousness that he recalls.

And why, monks, is it said “body”? It is afflicted; therefore it is called “body.” Afflicted by what? Afflicted by cold and heat, afflicted by hunger and thirst, afflicted by coming into contact with gnats, mosquitoes, flies, wind, sun, and snakes. It is afflicted; therefore it is called “body.”

And why is it called “feeling”? It is felt; therefore it is called “feeling.” What is felt? Pleasure is felt, pain is felt, and neutral feeling is felt. It is felt; therefore it is called “feeling.”

And why, is it called “perception”? It is perceived; therefore it is called perception. What is perceived? Blue is perceived, yellow is perceived, red is perceived, and white is perceived. It is perceived; therefore it is called “perception.”

And why are they called “mental formations”? They form or activate that which is formed; therefore they are called mental formations. What is formed that they form or activate? They activate the body in its corporeal nature; they activate feeling in its nature of feeling; they activate perception in its perceptual nature; they activate the mental formations in their directing nature; and they activate consciousness in its cognizing nature. They activate or determine that which is formed and conditioned, therefore they are called the “mental formations.”

And why is it called “consciousness”? It cognizes or is conscious; therefore it is called consciousness. Of what is it conscious? It is conscious of various sense impressions; therefore it is called “conscious-consciousness.”

Then, monks, the well instructed noble disciple thus reflects: “I am the prey of these five aggregates of grasping now; in the past likewise I was prey to them. Should I now continue to be enticed, lured, and cling to

them, then in future time I shall also continue to be prey to them, just as I am now because of my infatuation and clinging to them in the past.”

Thus reflecting, the noble disciple is freed from desire and enticement by them and he is apt for dispassion and non-attachment for his present body [and sense objects], for present feelings, perceptions, mental formations, and consciousness; he is apt for turning away from them, from clinging to them, he is apt for the ceasing of them.

Therefore, monks, every body [or sense object] every feeling, every perception, every mental formation, and every moment of consciousness, be it inward or outward, gross or subtle, inferior or superior, past, present, or future — I say every one should be regarded as, “This is not mine, I am not this, and this is not myself,” as it really is by perfect insight. Regarding rightly in this way, in this body having consciousness, and in all external conditions, there comes to be no tendency to the conceit “I” and “mine,” concerning these five “elements of being.”<sup>xvii</sup>

These five aggregates are not something which can be physically or mentally pulled apart and exist independently. They arise more or less simultaneously in each sense experience and are blended together in a mass, so to speak, so that each individual factor is difficult to distinguish, but they can be distinguished to some extent by “bare attention” and keen awareness.

Because this five-fold “mass-sense-experience” arises seemingly as a whole unit, and not perceived broken apart in its fleeting nature as it really is, most people take it for a very stable, self-owned, activity-sensory cognition. They mistakenly take it for granted as being “them” or their “soul,” failing to see it in its true nature as being devoid of any type of individual, substantial self-nature.

The aggregates were taught and explained by the Buddha as five, that they might be easily apprehended and understood in the order as follows.

The materiality, which is gross, is the objective field of the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and the mind; and after that arises feeling, which

feels that materiality as desirable or undesirable; then perception arises which apprehends the aspects of the feeling's objective field [the object], for "What one feels, that one perceives"; then arise the mental formations which form volitionally through means of perception, and lastly there is consciousness, which these things, beginning with feeling, have as their support and which dominates them.<sup>xviii</sup>

Consciousness brings the other four factors of form and name together, so to speak, and is the awareness of them as a unit from the subject-object point of view.

Two similes are given here to describe the five individual aggregates and their functions.

The materiality, as object of clinging, is like a sick-room because it is the dwelling place as physical base, door and object of the sick man (consciousness). The feeling as object of clinging is like the sickness because it afflicts. The perception as object of clinging is like the provocation of the sickness because it gives rise to feeling associated with greed, aversion, etc., owing to the perception of sense objects, and so on. The formations aggregate as object of clinging is like having recourse to what is unsuitable because it is the source of feeling, which is the sickness. For it is said, 'Feeling as feeling is the formed that they (the sankhara) form,' and likewise, because of unwholesome Kamma having been performed, resultant body consciousness has arisen accompanied by pain. Consciousness as object of clinging is like the sick man because it is never free from feeling [it has to experience it] which is the sickness.

Also, they are respectively like the prison, the punishment, the offense, the punisher, and the offender. The matter of the body is like the prison because it is the site of the punishment, which is feeling. Perception is like the offense because owing to the perception of beauty or ugliness, etc., it is a cause of the punishment, feeling. The formations aggregate is like the punisher because it is a cause of feeling. Consciousness is like the offender

because it is afflicted [by being conscious of it] by the punishment, feeling.<sup>xix</sup>

The Buddha has likened forms or material shapes to a large mass of froth floating on the water, which, when closely examined by a clear sighted man, appears to him to be empty, insubstantial, and without essence. He has likened feelings and sensations, which arise and pass away in the body and mind, to bubbles rising in a pool of water, bursting into nothing on the surface. If a clear sighted man were to see, observe closely, and examine them, they would appear to him to be empty, insubstantial, and without essence. A perception is likened to a mirage which appears at noon on a hot summer day, which, if seen, observed, and examined closely, would appear to be empty, without essence. What essence could there be in a perception or mirage (which has a ghost-like appearance)? The Buddha likened the mental formations to be pith-less like the trunk of a banana tree because, when cut down and stripped of its outer skin or layers, there is found no inner core or hardwood. A clear sighted man seeing, observing, and closely examining it would find them (the habit tendencies) to be empty, insubstantial, and without essence. Consciousness is likened to a magical illusion produced by a skillful magician, but if seen and observed keenly by a quick, clear sighted man, that magical illusion, which fools most people, is in reality empty, insubstantial, and without essence. What essence could there be in a magical illusion, or, in the same way, in consciousness?

*Form is like a lump of froth,  
Feelings are like water bubbles,  
As a mirage, so is perception,  
Mental-formations are as pith-less as a banana tree,  
A magical illusion is consciousness.  
So the Awakened One did illustrate.*

*In whatever way it is observed  
And properly examined,  
Empty it is and insubstantial,*

THE WAY TO PEACE AND HAPPINESS  
Chapter I: What The Buddha Discovered

*To him who sees it wisely,  
This body at the outset,  
Was taught by him of Wisdom wide,  
When abandoned of three things,  
Life [vital force], warmth and consciousness,  
Is cast aside, rejected, and abandoned;  
When body is bereft of these,  
Then thrown away it lies,  
Insentient, mere food for animals.  
Such is the fate of it,  
A prattling illusion,  
No essence here is found.*

*Form is like a lump of froth,  
Feelings are like water bubbles,  
As a mirage, so is perception,  
Mental-formations are as pith-less as a banana tree,  
A magical illusion is consciousness.  
So the Awakened One did illustrate.*

*In whatever way it is observed  
And properly examined,  
Empty it is and insubstantial,  
To him who sees it wisely.  
This body at the outset,  
Was taught by him of Wisdom wide,  
When abandoned of three things,  
Life [vital force], warmth and consciousness,  
Is cast aside, rejected, and abandoned;  
When body is bereft of these,  
Then thrown away it lies,  
Insentient, mere food for animals.  
Such is the fate of it,  
A prattling illusion,*

*No essence here is found.*

*Thus should the aggregates be looked upon  
By a monk of strong energy,  
Continually both day and night,  
Clearly aware and mindful.  
Let him leave behind all fetters,  
Make a refuge for himself,  
And as though his head were all afire,  
Act skillfully, aspiring for the deathless state (Nibbana).<sup>xx</sup>*

This five-fold mass of phenomena, the body and mind, should be regarded as, “This is not mine, I am not this, and this is not myself.” It is because of being attached to and mistakenly identifying them as “mine,” that the more gross forms of Dukkha, or suffering, arise. These gross forms are experienced as physical pain, sickness, old age, death, and the mental sorrow, grief, lamentation, frustration, anxiety, confusion, and misery which beset a person who is uncontrolled and heedless with respect to this “person-pack.”

The following are a number of selected suttas given by the Buddha to the Order of Monks and to individuals concerning the five aggregates.

Suppose, monks, a stream, a mountain torrent that is down-flowing, rising from afar, swiftly moving, and on both banks are growing grasses, reeds, creepers and shrubs which overhang the stream, and a man is swept away by that torrent. He clutches at the grasses, but they might break away, and he might clutch at the reeds and creepers and overhanging shrubs; but they also might break away. And owing to that instability of them, their breaking away, that man might come to his destruction, his downfall.

Even so, the untaught many-folk who are untrained, unskilled, unpracticed in Dhamma, they regard the five groups of grasping as their “self.” Then the body [and sense objects] break away beyond their



control, the feelings, perceptions, mental formations, and conscious-consciousness break away beyond their control, do not last, constantly changing, becoming otherwise. Owing to that instability and unreliability of those five grasping groups, the un-taught many-folk come by their sorrow, suffering, grief, woe, lamentation, and despair.<sup>xxi</sup>

Monks, I will show you grasping and worry; likewise not-grasping and not-worrying. Listen to it, apply your minds to it thoroughly.

And how, is there grasping and worry?

Those who are unskilled in the Noble Doctrine [the Dhamma], they regard the body [any sense stimuli], feelings, perceptions, mental formations, and consciousness as “self,” and these as being in the self, the self as having these; of such a one the body alters, feelings alter, perceptions alter, mental formations alter, and consciousness alters, becoming otherwise, Owing to this altering and becoming otherwise of the body . . . consciousness, his mind is busied with the altering, constantly changing conditions. From thus being busied, worried thoughts arise and persist, laying hold of his heart. From laying hold of his heart, he becomes troubled, and owing to vexation and clinging, he is worried.

Thus, comes grasping and worry.

And how is there no grasping and no worry? Such a one is well trained in the Dhamma, he regards not the body . . . consciousness as being the “self.” He regards them not as self, nor as having self, nor as belonging to any self. He regards all five factors as, “This is not mine, I am not this, and this is no myself.” Of such a one, the body, etc., alter and become otherwise. But in spite of this constant changing and altering, sorrow and grief, dejection, frustration, etc., do not rise in him.

Thus, is there no grasping and no worrying.<sup>xxii</sup>

Nakulapitar, the housefather, came into the presence of the Blessed One, saluted him, and sat down at one side. As he sat there, the housefather addressed the Blessed One as follows:

“Master, I am old, broken down, far gone in years; I have reached life’s end; I am sick and always ailing. Let the Blessed One comfort me, so that it will be a profit and a blessing unto me for many a long day.”

“True it is, housefather, that your body is weak and cumbersome. For one carrying this body about, housefather, to claim but a moment’s health would be sheer foolishness. Wherefore, housefather, thus you should train yourself: ‘Though my body is sick, my mind shall not be sick.’ Thus, housefather, must you train yourself.

“And how, Master, is the body sick and the mind sick too? And how is the body sick and the mind not sick?”

“Then listen, housefather, apply your mind and give heed to what I shall tell you. And how is the body sick and the mind sick too?”

“Herein, the untaught many folk, who are unskilled, untrained in the Dhamma, who discern not those who are Ariyans — these ignorant people regard their body as the ‘self,’ etc. They say: ‘I am the body, the body is mine,’ and are possessed by this idea; and so possessed by this idea, when their body alters and changes for the worse, owing to the unstable and changeful nature of the body, then sorrow and grief and . . . despair arise in their mind.

“They regard feelings, perceptions, the mental formations and consciousness as their ‘self,’ etc. They say ‘I am the mind, the mind is mine,’ and they are possessed by this idea, so that when the feelings . . . alter and change beyond their control owing to their unstable soulless nature, then sorrow and grief . . . arise in their mind. Thus, housefather, is how the body is sick and the mind sick too.

“And how, housefather, is the body sick but the mind not sick?”

“As to this, the well-instructed disciple, skilled and trained in the Dhamma regards not the body as ‘self.’ He does not say: ‘I am the body, the body is mine,’ nor is he possessed by the idea. So when the body alters and changes for the worse . . . then sorrow . . . frustration, etc. do not arise in him.

“In the same way, he regards not the feelings, perceptions, mental formations, and consciousness as ‘self.’ He does not say: ‘These are my mind, the mind is mine,’ nor is he possessed with this idea. Not being so

possessed, when the feelings . . . change for the worse, sorrow and grief . . . confusion and depression, etc., do not arise in him.

Thus, housefather, is it that the body can be sick but the mind not sick.”

Thus spoke the Blessed One, and the housefather, Nakulapitar, was pleased and welcomed what was said by the Master.<sup>xxiii</sup>

Body, feelings, perceptions, mental formations and consciousness are not the “self.” If they were the self they would not be involved in sickness, decay, and death, etc., and one could say of the body and the rest: “Let my body be this way, let my body be not this way [sick, etc.]. Let my feelings and . . . consciousness be this way [only pleasant, etc.], let my feelings and . . . consciousness be not this way [painful, etc.].

But, inasmuch as the body [and all material objects], feelings, perceptions, mental formations, and consciousness are not one’s “self,” that is why they are involved and undergo sickness, pain, sorrow . . . and death. And one cannot say: “Let my body and mind be this way, let them not be this way.”<sup>xxiv</sup>

The body is impermanent. That which is the cause, that which is the condition for the arising of the body [and any material object], that is also impermanent. So how could the body, being produced by what is impermanent, ever be permanent?

Feelings are impermanent; perceptions, mental formations, and consciousness are impermanent. That which are the cause, the condition for the arising of feelings . . . consciousness, that also are impermanent. How could feelings, etc., being produced by what are also impermanent and without self-nature, ever be permanent with self-nature?<sup>xxv</sup>

Monks, the untaught many-folk might well be repelled by this body, child of the four elements. They might cease to fancy it and regard it as their “self” and wish to be rid of it [free from the pain it brings] because its decay and death is inevitable.

Yet this that we call “mind,” with this the untaught many-folk are not able to feel repelled. They are not able to cease fancying it or wishing to

be free from it. They regard it as their “self”; they cleave to it and mistakenly conceive, thinking: “This is mine, I am this, and this is my spirit.”

Hence they are not detached, they cannot cease longing for it, and they are not able to be freed from the suffering, confusion, and frustration that it brings.

But it would be better if those untaught many-folk regard this body as the self, rather than the mind. Why so? Because it is seen how this body, compounded of the four great elements, persists for a year, or several years, or ten, twenty, or fifty years, sometimes persists for a hundred years or longer. But this that we call “mind,” it arises as one thing, ceases as another, continually changing and becoming otherwise, whether by night or by day, even in sleep.

Just as a monkey faring through the woods, through the thick forest, catches hold of a bough, letting it go, seizes another, and so he quickly moves along; even so, that which we call “mind” [feelings, perceptions, mental formations, and consciousness] arises as one thing, ceases as another, both by night and by day, even in sleep.<sup>xxvi5</sup>

Monks, I will teach you the burden, the laying hold of the burden, the lifting of it up, and the laying of it down. Do you listen.

And what is the burden? It is the five aggregates of grasping. That is to say, material shape, feelings, perceptions, mental formations, and consciousness. This is called the burden.

And what is the laying hold [arising] of the burden? It is the individual “person” view, that venerable one of such a name and family [grasping the five aggregates as self]. This is called laying hold of the burden.

And what is the lifting of it up? It is the craving which leads to Kamma accumulation, becoming and rebirth, along with the lust and the lure that lingers lovingly now here, now there, namely: the craving and attachment to material forms, feelings, perceptions, mental formations, and consciousness. This is called the taking up of the burden.

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<sup>5</sup> The endnotes state this reference as “Samyutta Nikaya XII, §61; (Volume III, pp. 65-66).” *But burning is addressed in §61 and I cannot find the correct reference in the Book of the Aggregates (Khandhavagga), Samyutta Nikaya translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi. (Noted by Dhammavamsa)*

And what is the laying down of the burden? It is the utter passionless, remainder-less ceasing of that very craving-attachment, the giving up and renouncing, the release and the absence of longing, desire, and clinging for the five aggregates of grasping. This is called the laying down of the burden.

*The burden is indeed the fivefold-mass,  
The seizer of the burden, man;  
Taking it up is sorrow in this world,  
The laying of it down is bliss.  
If a man lay this heavy burden down,  
And take not any other burden up,  
If he draw out that craving, root and all,  
No more hungry is he, he is free.*<sup>xxvii</sup>

“What is not yours, monks, renounce it. Renouncing it will be to your good, to your happiness for a long time. And what is not yours?”

“The body [and sense objects] is not yours; feelings, perception, mental formations, and consciousness are not yours. Renounce them. Renouncing them will be to your good, to your happiness.

“It is as if a person were to carry away, burn, or do as he pleases with the grass, the twigs, branches, and leaves in this Jeta Grove. Would it occur to you, to say, ‘That person is carrying us away, burning us, is doing as he pleases with us?’”

“Certainly not, Lord.”

“For what reason?”

“Because, Lord, this is not ourselves, nor what belongs to ourselves.”

“So also, monks the body is not yours; the feelings and perceptions are not yours; the mental formations and consciousness are not yours; renounce them. Renouncing them will be to your good, to your peace and happiness for a long time.”<sup>xxviii</sup>

Before my Enlightenment, monks, while I was not yet completely Awakened, I thought: “What is the satisfaction and what is the misery in regard to the body [and sense objects], in regard to feelings, perceptions,

mental formations, and consciousness, and what is the release from them?”

And then this occurred to me: “Whatever happiness and pleasure arises dependent upon the body [or other sense stimuli], dependent upon feelings . . . consciousness — this is the satisfaction, etc., in them. Whatever there is of impermanence, changeability, pain, and confusion on account thereof — this is the misery and unsatisfactory-ness inherent in the body and the mind.”

Whatever there is of being free of desire, delusion, and attachment, the abandoning and forsaking of craving and clinging in regard to these five aggregates — this is the release from the bondage, the suffering and frustration related to them.

As long as I did not know the satisfaction as satisfaction, the misery as misery, and the release as release in regard to these five grasping groups — according to actuality, as it really is — then just so long it was that I did not acknowledge that I was fully Enlightened with unequaled and perfect Enlightenment.

But, when I knew the satisfaction as merely satisfaction, and the misery as merely misery, and I knew the release as release concerning these five “elements of being,” according to actuality, then I acknowledged that in this world I was fully Enlightened with unsurpassable, perfect Enlightenment. And the knowledge and vision arose in me: “Unshakeable is the liberation of this mind, this is the last conditioned existence; and there is now no further becoming.”<sup>xxix</sup>

If there were not this satisfaction which comes from the body, from feelings and the rest, beings would not desire and hanker after them. But inasmuch as there is this satisfaction and pleasure in them [temporarily], beings do desire and long for them.

If misery never afflicted these five aggregates, beings would not have aversion or be repelled by them. But inasmuch as misery does afflict these five aggregates, beings are averse and repelled by them.

If there were no way of escape from the sorrow and pain inherent in these five grasping groups, beings could not escape from them. But

inasmuch as there is a way to escape from them, beings are able to free themselves from the sorrow and pain that they can bring.

So long as beings have not thoroughly understood and comprehended as it really is, the satisfaction as such, the misery as such, and the release as such in regard to these five grasping groups of material and mental phenomena — for just that long will they not remain aloof, detached and contented, with the barriers of the mind done away.

But so soon as beings do thoroughly penetrate and understand by right insight according to reality, the satisfaction as such, the misery as such, and the release as such . . . then beings will remain aloof, detached and contented, with the barriers of the mind done away.<sup>xxx</sup>

Attachment, monks, is bondage; aloofness is freedom. By being attached to the five groups of grasping, consciousness, if it gets a standing [adheres to an object] may persist. With the five groups for its object, with them for its platform, seeking means for enjoyment, it may come by growth, increase, and abundance.

If a man were to declare thus: “Apart from form, apart from feeling, apart from perception, apart from mental formations, there will show forth the coming or the going or the increase or the rebirth of consciousness,” to do that would be impossible.

If desire and attachment to the five aggregates of clinging, monks, is abandoned, by that abandonment, its foothold is cut off. Thereby, there is no platform for consciousness. Without that platform consciousness has no growth, it generates no action, it accumulates nothing and is freed. By this freedom it is steady and by its steadiness it is happy, and owing to happiness it is not troubled. Being untroubled of itself, it becomes utterly well, so that one knows: “Destroyed is rebirth, lived is the Holy Life, done is the task, for life in these conditions there is no hereafter.”<sup>xxxi</sup>

Then the venerable Radha came to the Blessed One. Having saluted the Blessed One he sat down to one side. So seated the venerable Radha thus addressed the Blessed One: “They say, ‘Mara! Mara!’, Lord. Please Lord, what is this Mara?”

“Where there is form, Radha, there is Mara [temptation and delusion], or things having the nature of Mara, or at any rate what arises and perishes.”

“Therefore, Radha, regard the body [any sense attraction] as Mara, as having the nature of Mara, or at any rate as perishable. Regard it as an impostor, as a dart, as suffering, as a liable source of pain. They who so regard it, they rightly regard it. And the same is to be said of feelings, perceptions, mental formations, and consciousness.”

“But rightly regarding, Lord, for what purpose?”

“Rightly regarding, Radha, for the sake of dispassion.”

“But dispassion, Lord, for what purpose is it?”

“Dispassion, Radha, is to get release.”

“But release, Lord, what is it for?”

“Release, Radha, means Nibbana.”

“But Nibbana, Lord, what is the aim of that?”

“This, Radha, is a question that goes too far. You can grasp no limit to the question. Rooted in Nibbana, Radha, the Holy Life for the right complete destruction of suffering is lived. Nibbana is its end.”<sup>xxxii</sup><sup>6</sup>

Feelings, perceptions, mental formations, and consciousness can only come into being or arise through contact with one of the six objects of sense. This can occur only when there is a body with unimpaired sense organs. The body is lifeless and immobile without the mind to give it life and operate it. The body is merely a vehicle for the mind to work through. The interdependence of mind and body is illustrated by the following analogy.

Just as when two sheaves of reeds are propped one against the other, each one gives the other consolidating support, and when one falls the other also falls. So too, in the five constituents of a being, mentality-materiality occurs as an interdependent state. Each of its component factors gives the other mutual support, and when one falls owing to

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<sup>6</sup> The endnotes state the reference as “Samyutta Nikaya XXII, §1; (Volume III, pp. 155-156).” The correct reference should be Samyutta Nikaya **XXIII** instead of XXII. (Noted by Dhammavamsa)



death or malfunction, the other falls too. Hence those ancient wise men said:

*“The mental and the material  
Are twins and each support the other;  
When one breaks up, they both break up  
Through inter-conditionality.”<sup>xxxiii</sup>*

Furthermore, mentality has no efficient power; it cannot occur on its own. Mentality does not [physically] eat, it does not drink nor speak, nor does it adopt postures. And materiality is without efficient power; it can not function on its own power or motivation. It has no desire to eat, drink, speak, walk, sit, or lie down and so forth. But rather it is when supported by mentality [as the motivation] that materiality occurs [body movements, speech, etc.]. When mentality has the desire to eat, drink, talk, etc., it is the materiality that actually does the eating, and so forth. This is illustrated in the following simile.

“A blind man and a stool-crawling cripple wanted to go somewhere. The blind man said to the cripple, ‘Look, I can do what should be done by legs but have no eyes with which to see what is rough and smooth.’ The cripple said, ‘Look, I can do what should be done by eyes, but I have no legs with which to go and come.’”

The blind man was delighted and he made the cripple climb up on his shoulders, and thus sitting, the cripple spoke thus: ‘Turn left, take the right, leave the right, take the left,’ and so on, and so they went about.”<sup>xxxiv</sup>

Herein, both the blind man and the cripple have no efficient power of their own by which to move freely. They are impotent; they cannot travel by their own strength. But there is nothing to prevent their going when they support each other.

So too, mentality and materiality each on their own have no efficient power to function. But there is nothing to prevent their functioning as a unit when they support each other. Hence the ancients said:

*“They cannot come to be by their own strength,  
Or yet maintain themselves by their own strength;  
Relying for support on other factors,  
Weak in themselves, and formed, they come to be;  
They come to be with others as condition,  
They are aroused by others as their objects,  
They are produced by objects and conditions,  
And each by something other than itself.*

*And just as men depend upon  
A boat for traversing the sea,  
So does the matter-body need  
The mental body for occurrence.  
Depending each upon the other,  
The boat and men go on the sea.  
And so do mind and body both  
Depend the one upon the other.”<sup>xxxv</sup>*

Therefore, just as a marionette is void, soulless, and without curiosity, and while it walks and stands merely through the combination of strings and wood, yet it seems as if it had curiosity and interestedness.

So too, this mentality-materiality [mind-body organism] is void, soulless and without curiosity, and while it walks and stands, etc., yet it seems as if it has curiosity and interestedness. This is how it should be regarded. Hence the ancients said:

*“The mental and material are really here,  
But here there is no solid Soul to be found;  
For it is void and merely fashioned like a doll —  
Just suffering piled up like grass and sticks.”<sup>xxxvi</sup>*

So in many ways it is only mentality-materiality (nama-rupa) that is illustrated. Therefore, just as when the component parts such as axles,

wheels, frame, poles, etc. are arranged in a certain way, there comes to be the mere term of common usage, “chariot,” yet in the ultimate sense, when each part is examined, there is no chariot. In the same way, when bricks, wood, mud, tiles etc. are placed so that they enclosed a space in a certain way, there comes to be the mere term, “house”; and when the fingers, thumb, and palm are brought tightly together, there is the term of common usage, “fist”; with men, horses, and weapons — ‘army’; with trunk, branches and leaves — ‘tree,’ and so on and so forth.

So too, when there are these five aggregates, as objects of clinging, there comes to be the term of common usage, “person” or “animal,” etc.; yet in the ultimate sense when each component part is examined, there is nothing as a basis for the assumption of “I am” or my “self,” there is just mentality-materiality.

The comprehension and vision of one who sees in this way is called correct vision which, after defining mentality-materiality by these various methods, establishes one on the plane of non-confusion and doubt by overcoming the delusion of a self or person.<sup>xxxvii</sup>

## THE LUTE

Suppose, monks, the sound of a lute has never been heard before by a king. Then that king hears the sound of a lute and says:

“Good man, pray, what is that sound so entrancing, so delightful, and pleasant to the ear, so intoxicating, so ravishing, of such power to bind?”

Then his attendants say to that king: “That, O King, is the sound of a lute.”

The king says: “Go, my good man, and fetch me that lute.”

So they fetch the lute and say to the king: “Here is that lute, the sound of which was so entrancing, so delightful, and of power to bind.”

Then the king says: “Enough of this lute, my man, fetch me that sound.”

Then they explain to the king: “This lute, O King, consists of diverse parts, a great number of parts, to wit: owing to the belly of parchment, the

handle, the frame, the strings, owing to the bridge. And because of the proper effort of a player it produces sound. Thus O King, this lute, so called, consists of so many diverse parts.”

Then that king breaks up that lute into many pieces and burns the pieces in fire. Then he takes a heap of the ashes and flings them into a strong wind, dissolving them into nothing. Then the king says: “A poor thing is that which you call a lute, whatever a lute may be. Herein the world is exceedingly led astray.”

Even so, a wise, discerning person, investigating the body [or any sense object] as far as there is scope for body; investigating feelings, investigating perceptions, investigating mental formations, and investigating consciousness, so far as there is scope for these phenomena — in all these investigations, whatever there be of “I” or “mine” or “soul” — there is none of that to be found for him.<sup>xxxviii</sup><sup>7</sup>

## THE HUMAN PUPPET

At one time a certain nun had finished her noontime meal and had sat down under a tree for her afternoon meditation, meditating on the realities of life. As she was sitting there observing objectively her body and mind, Mara (the negative, disruptive tendencies in the mind) came into her awareness and the following dialogue took place.

Mara (her own deluded subconscious):

Who was it that made the human puppet?  
Where is the maker of the human doll?  
Whence, tell me, hath the puppet come to be?  
Where will the puppet cease and pass away?

...Sela, the Nun:

Neither self-made the puppet is, nor yet

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<sup>7</sup> The endnotes state the reference as “*Visuddhimagga, Volume IV, Chapter XXXV, §205; (pp. 129-130).*” But I cannot find this reference in the *Path of Purification* translated from the Pali by Bhikkhu Nanamoli. (Noted by Dhammavamsa)

By another of causes it came to be,  
By rupture of the causes it dies away.  
Like to a certain seed sown in the field,  
Which, when it lighteth on the taste of earth,  
And moisture likewise, by these two doth grow.  
So the aggregates and the elements,  
And the six spheres of sense — even all these,  
By reason of a cause [craving] they came to be  
By rupture of the cause they die away.

The same thing happened to another nun on a different occasion.

Mara:

By whom was wrought this being?  
Where is he who makes him?  
Whence doth a being arise?  
Where doth the being cease and pass away?

Vajira:

Being! Being! Why dost thou harp upon that word?  
Among false opinions, Mara, hast thou strayed.  
Mere bundle of conditioned factors, this!  
No “being” can here be discerned.  
For just as, when the parts are rightly set,  
The word “chariot” ariseth in the mind,  
So doth our usage convenient to say,  
A “being” when the aggregates are there.  
Nay, it is simply ill that arises,  
Ill that doth persist, and ill that wanes away.  
Nought but ill is it that comes to pass.  
Nought else but ill is it doth cease to be. <sup>xxxix</sup>

When a person rejects this correct vision and attitude towards the mind and body, and assumes that a separate, individual soul exists, he has to conclude either that it comes to be annihilated at death or that it continues

forever. If he concludes that this soul does come to extinction at death, he falls into the annihilationist theory. (*The annihilationist theory, the view held by the materialists, is that this present life in the body constitutes the “self” or “soul.” They believe this mind-body is totally destroyed at the death of the body and that is the finish of it all. In that way they hold the saying: “Eat, drink, and be merry, and forget about everybody and everything else, for there is no worry about any heaven or hell in the future.”*) On the other hand, if he concludes that his “soul” will exist forever, he falls into the eternalist view. (*The eternalist theory states that there is a permanent, individual soul which exists independently of the body and mind, and that it continues on, even after the death of the body, to enjoy eternal life, such as in a heaven, or damnation in hell.*)

Of these two types of soul belief, one either holds back, concluding that the assumed soul is eternal, or he over-reaches, concluding that it comes to be once and for all annihilated.

Hence the Blessed One said:

There are two kinds of view, monks. When gods and human beings are obsessed with themselves, some hold back and some over-reach; and only those with eyes see.

And how do some hold back? Gods and human beings love craving and becoming, they delight in becoming, rejoice in becoming. When the Dhamma is taught to them for the ceasing of craving and becoming, their minds do not enter into it, become settled and accept it, be resolute in it. Thus it is that some hold back.

And how do some over-reach? Some are ashamed, humiliated, and disgusted by that same becoming; they are concerned with non-becoming [not existing again in the future], saying in this way: “Sirs, when with the breakup of the body, this soul is cut off, annihilated, does not become any more after death, this then is peaceful and sublime, this is true.” Thus it is that some over-reach.

And how do those with eyes see? Here, an intelligent, wise, discerning man sees what has become as “having become.” Because of ignorance

as condition the mental activities arise; because of the mental activities consciousness arises; because of consciousness the mind-body organism comes to be; this makes for the completion of the spheres of sense, giving rise to contact, feeling, craving, grasping, becoming, rebirth, and subsequently old age, suffering, pain, grief, decay, and death. This is how this whole mass of “ill” has become. But when ignorance and craving are cut off with Wisdom, all of this becoming ceases. This is how one with eyes sees, and he enters upon the way to detachment and dispassion for all of it, to the fading away of desire and attachment and greed for it, he enters upon the way to its cessation.<sup>xl</sup>

Thus have the five aggregates of grasped-after and clung-to phenomena of mind and matter been described and illustrated in various ways by the Awakened One. The Noble Truth of Dukkha, or suffering, as it is commonly called, is based on the universal impermanence and soulless-ness of conditioned existence. This truth of Dukkha is a direct and common experience to all living creatures. It is plain to see and realize if we just slow down and take a look at these things as they happen in and around ourselves and in others. We will then perceive the reason for the various experiences which befall a person, whether pleasant or painful. This universal truth of Dukkha is constantly proclaiming itself everywhere. We should contemplate and reflect on these phenomena which make up conditioned existence. We must cultivate a detached and dispassionate attitude for these “elements of being.” In this way the erroneously construed notion of an individual “I” or “self” which arises along with and permeates this five-fold mass can be understood, undermined, and eliminated by the power of wisdom. Then one can live with consciousness, free from the bondage of mind and matter and experience, and live in the ultimate release and sublime happiness of Nibbana.

Monks, so long as I did not fully understand these five grasping groups, the arising of these five groups, their ceasing and the way leading to their ceasing — just so long was I not assured, in this world with its devas, its Mara, its Brahmans, its men and animals, that I was fully Enlightened. But as soon, brethren, as I did fully understand them

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as they really are, these five groups of grasping, their arising, their ceasing, and the way leading to their ceasing, then I was assured that in this world I had attained supreme, unsurpassable Awakening.<sup>xii</sup>





## CHAPTER II

# THE SECOND NOBLE TRUTH

The Buddha never said that there was a first beginning or cause for the origination and continuation of living beings, the five aggregates of clinging, and all the greed, suffering, confusion, and hatred which exists in the world on account thereof.

Incalculable, monks, is the beginning of this faring on. The earliest point is not revealed of the running-on, the birth and death of beings cloaked in ignorance and tied by craving.<sup>1</sup>

The Buddha did not admit the existence of any permanent entity or creator who has created or ordered, or who governs the world of mind and matter, and to whom living beings have to answer when they die. This whole process of life — birth, sickness, disease, sorrow, pain, unhappiness, confusion, and death — has evolved and continues because of interdependent causal conditions. Everything which has come into existence — in the past, now in the present, and in the future — has depended, is now depending, and will depend upon a whole host of interrelated and supporting conditions. All of this works out in a continuous series of compounded relations of cause and effect. There is no set governing body, God; or universal “soul,” behind the scenes consciously managing, neither directly or indirectly, the whole show.

The Buddha used an analytical approach. By his careful, unbiased observation of the way things were happening in his mind and body, he was able to penetrate the mystery of how all these manifestations of mind and matter evolve and continue. In the Second Noble Truth he detailed the origin of suffering (Dukkha), the conditions which are needed for the development and continuation of conditioned life, and expressed it in the cycle of Interdependent Origination, the cycle of repeated birth and deaths. This is termed *samsara*, the continuous fluctuating sea of life in which all

living beings, as long as they are immersed and shrouded in delusion and fettered by craving and attachment, must revolve around and around.

The following are several of the Awakened One's own discourses on the subject, explaining how he experienced the whole complex process.

And to me, monks, before I was fully Enlightened, while yet unenlightened, there came this thought: "Alas! This world has fallen upon trouble. There is getting born and growing old, and dying and falling and being reborn. And yet from this suffering an escape is not known, even from sickness and decay. O, when shall an escape from this suffering be known?"

Then this thought came to me: "What now being present does sickness, decay, and death come to be, what conditions sickness, decay, and death?" Then to me, thinking according to causal law [attention to cause and effect], there came to pass comprehension of insight: "Let there be *birth*, then there is sickness, decay, and death. Sickness, decay, and death are conditioned by birth." Then to me came this thought: "What now being present does birth come to be? What conditions birth?" Then to me, thinking according to the law of cause and effect, came to pass comprehension of insight: "Let there be *becoming* [fresh Kamma production], then birth comes to be. . . . Let there be *grasping*, then becoming comes to be. . . . Let there be *craving*, then grasping comes to be. . . . Let there be *feeling*, then craving comes to be. . . . Let there be *contact*, then feeling comes to be. . . . Let there be the *six sense-spheres*, then contact comes to be. . . . Let there be the *body and mind* [name-and-form], then the sense-spheres come to be. . . . Let there be *consciousness* [rebirth-linking] then body and mind come to be. . . . Let there be *mental formations*, then consciousness comes to be. . . . Let there be *ignorance*, then the mental formations come to be.

Such in truth are the mental formations conditioned by ignorance [the delusion of 'I am'], consciousness generated by the mental formations, name-and-form by consciousness, the six sense-spheres by name-and-form, contact by the six sense-spheres, feeling by contact, craving by feeling, grasping by craving, becoming by grasping, birth by becoming,

old age, sickness, sorrow, suffering, grief, lamentation, despair, decay, and death are conditioned by birth.

Even just so, is the coming to be of this entire mass of suffering.

“Coming to be! Coming to be!” With this thought there arose in me things not taught before; there arose vision, there arose knowledge, insight arose, wisdom [penetration] arose, and light arose.

Then, monks, to me came this thought: “What now being absent does sickness, decay, sorrow . . . death come not to be? From the ceasing of what is there the ceasing of sickness . . . death?” Then to me, thinking according to causal law, came to pass comprehension of insight: “Let there be no birth, then sickness . . . death come not to be. From the ceasing of birth there is the ceasing of sickness, decay, and death.

And in the same way came the comprehension of insight: “*With the ceasing of becoming there is the ceasing of birth; with the ceasing of grasping there is the ceasing of becoming; with the ceasing of craving there is the ceasing of grasping; with the ceasing of feeling there is the ceasing of craving; with the ceasing of contact there is the ceasing of feeling; with the ceasing of the sense-spheres there is the ceasing of contact; with the ceasing of name-and-form there is the ceasing of the sense-spheres; with the ceasing of consciousness there is the ceasing of name-and-form; with the ceasing of the mental formations there is the ceasing of consciousness; with the ceasing of ignorance there is the ceasing of the mental formations.*” Such in truth is the ceasing of this entire mass of suffering.

“Ceasing! Ceasing!” At this thought there arose in me things not learned before; vision arose, knowledge arose, insight arose, wisdom arose, and light arose.¶

What is the meaning of old age and decay? [It is] the old age and decay of beings; their becoming aged, frail, gray, and wrinkled; the failing of their vital force, the wearing out and failing of the sense organs, loss of memory, etc. This is called old age and decay.

What is death? [It is] the departing, the destruction, the dying, the vanishing of beings from the sphere of existence in which they were born; the completion of their span of life, the dissolution of the five

aggregates of existence, the discarding of the body, the laying down of the carcass. This is called death.

What is birth? [It is] the arising of beings into this or that sphere of existence; their conception and springing into existence; the manifestation, the coming together of the factors of existence; the acquiring of a body and the beginning of sense activity. This is called birth.

What is becoming? [It is] the production of fresh Kamma based on delusion and craving, which leads to bondage and rebirth; further entanglement in the kammic tangle. This is called becoming.

What is grasping? There are four graspings: ① grasping and clinging to sensual desires and objects; ② clinging to dogmatic views, ideas, opinions about the nature or origin of the world, God, the soul, etc.; ③ clinging to and practicing ceremonial rites and rituals, believing them to be an external means of mental purification or giving one salvation [for example, bathing in holy water or believing in a savior]; and ④ clinging to the belief in an individual, eternal “soul.” These are the four graspings.

What is craving? [It is] craving for the six kinds of sense stimuli or objects in which is thought to be found satisfaction or happiness; craving for things to see, hear, for things to smell and taste, craving for things felt by the body, and the craving for mental phenomena such as daydreaming, fantasies about the future, memories of the past, hallucinations, inner lights, psychic powers, etc. This is called craving.

What is feeling? There are six kinds of feeling: feeling born of eye contact with visible objects; feeling born of ear contact with sounds, nose with smells, tongue with tastes, body with objects of touch, and feeling born of the mind cognizing mental phenomena. [It is any] feeling of sensation whether pleasant, painful or neutral. This is called feeling.

What is contact? [It is] the coming together of the sense objects with their respective sense organs in the body and the mind, and hence the arising of consciousness. This is called contact.

What is the six-fold sense sphere? [It is] the six spheres or domains in which a sense experience can occur: the spheres of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touch, feeling, and mind. There are three factors for

each sphere of sense which are necessary to complete a sense experience: the properly functioning sense-organ, the impingement of the appropriate sense stimulus, and the attention to the stimulus which gives rise to consciousness. When these three factors come together, then the sense sphere is complete and a conscious experience can arise. This is called the six-fold sense sphere, as there are six senses in the human world and most animals. This can only obtain in most cases when the mind is functioning through a body.

What is name-and-form? Feeling, perception, mental formations and consciousness — this is called name. The four primary elements and the material shape they assume — this is called form. [In this sense it is the mind conjoined with a body to form a conscious being.]

What is consciousness? It is the presence of the six kinds of sense stimuli which arise upon their impingement on the corresponding sense organ; the six varieties of consciousness of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching and mind. Moreover, when describing rebirth, it is the re-linking consciousness (*patisandhi-vinnana*) which arises at death and manifests or re-links in another existence. [This will be explained later.]

What are the mental formations? These are the accumulated impressions in the mind: the habit-like tendencies and determining factors from which most of the activities of body, speech and mind arise.

What is ignorance? It is the not-knowing, the not understanding of the Four Noble Truths. It is not seeing and comprehending the impermanent and soulless condition of the five aggregates of grasping; it is being under the delusion that there is an individual, substantial self, soul or “I” which inhabits the body and mind and which experiences the objects in the world with attachment and aversion.<sup>ii</sup>

So, because of ignorance, the mental formations are kept strong, do not decrease, are not exhausted. This produces the moment-to-moment “I” consciousness and likewise the rebirth-linking consciousness at the time of death, which manifests for its use another body in another existence through which the mind can operate.

That completes the three requisites for the six-fold sense sphere so that contact can take place, thereby giving rise to feeling, and from feeling arises craving, grasping, and becoming. This fresh Kamma accumulation again strengthens the mental formations which will give rise to future rebirth. Because of having been born into this conditioned world we must experience the impermanence, the sickness, sorrow, suffering, confusion, decay, and death that it has to offer. This is how this whole mass of Dukkha rolls on and on.

But with the utter fading out and non-existence of ignorance, there is the fading, the slowing, the ceasing of the mental grasping force and, by and by, the non-production of rebirth linking consciousness, hence an end to rebirth. Hence, no more name-and-form, no sense activity, no feeling, etc. Such is the ceasing of this entire mass of Dukkha!

Just as, monks, when on some hilltop when rain is falling in thick drops, that water coursing according to the slope, fills the hillside clefts, chasms, and gullies; these being filled, the tarns fill up; the tarns being full, the lakes fill up . . . the little rivers fill up . . . the great rivers fill up . . . the seas . . . the oceans are filled.

Even so, there is a causal dependence of the mental formations on ignorance, consciousness on mental formations, name-and-form on consciousness, the six sense spheres on name-and-form, contact on the sense spheres, feeling on contact, craving on feeling, grasping on craving, becoming on grasping, birth on becoming, sickness, sorrow, decay, and death on birth. <sup>iii</sup>

Now when the noble disciple has by right insight well seen as it really is, this sequence of causal happening and these things as having causally happened, never does it arise to him that he will run back to the past thinking, “Did I live in the past or did I not? What was I then, how was I then, or from being what, what did I become?” Nor will that wise one run to the future thinking, “Shall I become in the future, or shall I not? What shall I become, how will I become, or where will I become in the future?” Nor will he even now become perplexed within himself as to

the present situation thinking, “Am I indeed or am I not? What indeed am I, how indeed am I? From where came this; where will it go?”

Why do these questions never arise in such a correct seeing wise one? Because by right insight he has well seen it as it really is, both this causal interdependence and these things as having causally happened.

[He never thinks of a “person” or “I” who is involved in all these activities. He discerns only the impersonal five aggregates of phenomena continuously arising and passing away in a sequential continuity.]<sup>iv</sup>

I will teach you, monks, both the wrong way and the right way. Listen to it, give your minds thoroughly and I will speak.

And which is the wrong way? Conditioned by ignorance, the mental formations come to be; conditioned by the mental formations, consciousness comes to be . . . name-and-form comes to be . . . the sense spheres come to be . . . contact comes to be . . . feeling . . . craving . . . grasping . . . becoming . . . birth comes to be . . . sickness, sorrow, grief, old age, decay, and death come to be. Thus is the arising of this entire mass of Dukkha. This is the wrong way.

And what is the right way? From the utter fading out and ceasing of ignorance is the fading out and ceasing of the mental formations, from the ceasing of the mental formations is the ceasing of consciousness . . . ceasing of name-and-form . . . ceasing of the sense spheres . . . ceasing of contact . . . feeling . . . craving . . . grasping . . . becoming . . . birth . . . and with the ceasing of birth comes the ceasing of sickness, sorrow, grief, old age, decay, and death. Thus is the ceasing of this entire mass of Dukkha. This is the right way.<sup>v</sup>

I will teach you, monks, how the world comes to be and how it passes away. Listen to it, apply your minds well.

What is the arising of the world? Because of the eye and visible objects, visual consciousness [seeing] arises. Contact is the result. Feeling is conditioned by contact, craving is conditioned by feeling, grasping . . . becoming . . . birth and the subsequent suffering. This is the arising of the world. The same holds true for the other senses.

And what is the passing away of the world? By the utter fading and ceasing of ignorance, the mental formations cease . . . consciousness ceases . . . and so forth. This is the ceasing of the world.<sup>vi</sup>

## SUSTENANCE

This whole process of mind and matter carries on because of sustenance or food, nutriment, which feeds the activities and allows them to generate and strengthen themselves. Without nutriment these activities will gradually subside and eventually cease altogether. The basic sustenance is craving, but it is due to the ego, or I-consciousness, desiring to continue, that attachment and craving are kept reinforced in grasping and becoming.

“Monks, these four forms of nutriment are for the maintenance of beings that have come to birth and for assisting those who seek to become. What are the four?

“[First, there is] *material food*, coarse or fine; secondly, *contact*, or sensory impingement; thirdly, *mental striving* [kamma accumulation]; and, fourthly, *consciousness*.

“And of these four nutriments for the maintaining of beings, what is the base, the source, the condition, the cause, the birth, and the origin? It is *craving*, I declare. Craving is their base, from craving they are produced, they arise, and craving causes them to be.

“If there not be passion, delight, or craving as to anyone of these four sustentances, then there consciousness is not established nor fruitful. Therefore, in consequence, name-and-form does not manifest, there mental formations do not grow, and there is in the future no renewed becoming and rebirth, nor decay, sickness, suffering, and death.<sup>vii</sup>

“Just as if there were a roofed house or hall having windows on the north, the south, and the east (not the west). Then when at sunrise a sunbeam enters by the eastern window, where does it alight?”

“On the west wall, Lord.”



“If there be no west wall, monks, where does it alight?”

“On the ground, Lord.”

“If there be no ground, monks, where does it alight?”

“On water, Lord.”

“If there be no water, monks, where does that sunbeam alight?”

“It alights nowhere, Lord.”

“Even so monks, if there be no passion nor delight nor craving as to any of those four forms of nutriment, there consciousness does not become stationed or fruitful. There, in consequence, name-and-form does not manifest, there kamma formations do not grow, and there is in the future no renewed becoming and rebirth, decay, suffering, and death. This is the ceasing of the entire five-fold mass of Dukkha.<sup>viii</sup>

The Blessed One was teaching the doctrine of the four sustenances and when he had named them, a monk, the venerable Phaggunā, said to the Blessed One: “How now is it, Lord, who feeds on the consciousness-sustenance?”

“Not a fit question, Phaggunā. I am not saying that someone feeds on it. If I were saying so, then the question would be a fit one.”

“But, Phaggunā, if you were to ask: ‘Of what now, Lord, is consciousness the sustenance?’ then this would be a fit question, and the fit answer would be: Consciousness is the sustenance of renewed becoming, of future rebirth, of suffering, decay, and death.”

“Who now, Lord, exercises contact?”

“Not a fit question, Phaggunā. I am not saying someone exercises contact. But if you were to ask: ‘Conditioned by what, Lord, does contact arise?’ the fit answer would be: ‘Conditioned by the six-fold sphere of sense, contact arises and, conditioned by contact, feeling arises.’”

“Who now, Lord, is it who craves?”

“Not a fit question, Phaggunā, I am not saying someone craves. But if you were to ask: ‘Conditioned by what does craving arise?’ the fit answer would be: ‘Conditioned by feeling, craving arises; and further, conditioned by craving grasping arises, conditioned by grasping becoming arises, conditioned by becoming birth arises, and conditioned

by birth arises sickness, sorrow, suffering, old age, decay, and death. Such is the arising of this entire mass of ill.<sup>ix</sup>

That which we will, monks, and that which we intend to do, and that wherewithal we are occupied — this becomes an object for the persistence of consciousness. The object being there, there comes to be a station of consciousness. Consciousness being stationed, grows, and rebirth of consciousness takes place in a renewed existence. And from that future birth will also arise the subsequent sickness . . . decay, and death. Such is the arising of this entire mass of ill.

Even if we do not will, nor intend to will, but yet we are still occupied about something, this too, becomes an object for the persistence of consciousness . . . where rebirth and suffering take place in the future.

But if we neither will, nor intend to will, nor are we occupied about something, then there is no becoming of an object for the persistence of consciousness. Consciousness not being stationed nor growing, there will be no renewed existence in the future. Such is the ceasing of this entire mass of ill.<sup>x</sup>

In him, monks, who contemplates the enjoyment that there is in all that makes for grasping and fettering [the five aggregates], craving grows, grasping grows, becoming grows, and there comes about the descent of consciousness to a future existence at the end of the present span of life. Such is the continuation of this entire mass of ill.

It is just as if there should be a blazing bonfire of ten or twenty or thirty or forty loads of dry sticks; thereupon a man should throw from time to time some dry grass, should throw dry sticks, should throw dry cow dung. Verily, such a great bonfire so fed, so supplied with fuel, would burn for a long time.

Or it is as if, because of oil and because of a wick, an oil lamp were to be burning, and in it from time to time a man were to pour oil and to adjust the wick. Verily, such an oil lamp so fed, so supplied with fuel, would burn for a long time.

Or it is as if there were a tender sapling, and a man were from time to time to clear around the roots, were from time to time give it earth, were

to give it water. Verily, such a tender young sapling so fed, so given nutriment, would attain to growth, to development, and to abundance.

Even so, in him who contemplates the enjoyment of all things which make for grasping and fettering, craving grows, grasping and becoming grow, and there comes about the rebirth of consciousness in a renewed existence. . . . Such is the uprising and continuation of this entire mass of ill.

But in him, monks, who contemplates the misery and soullessness of all conditioned things, then craving, grasping, becoming, and rebirth all fade away and cease, they are cut off at the roots, unable for growth.

Just as if onto that some bonfire, no one were to add any additional fuel, that same bonfire for want of fuel would become extinct.

Or if that same oil lamp were no longer supplied with oil and the wick not adjusted, then the flame of that oil lamp would die out for want of fuel, would become extinct.

Or if to that same tender young sapling, a man were to come with an ax and a basket, and he were to cut down that sapling at the root, and were then to dig a trench around and to draw out the roots even to the rootlets and fibers, and he were then to cut the young tree into pieces, split them up and make them into chips, and were to dry them in the sun and wind. Then he was to burn them by fire to ashes and then winnow the ashes in a strong wind. Verily monks, that tender young sapling so cut down at the root would be made into nothing, incapable of arising in the future.

Even so, in him who contemplates the misery and soullessness in all that makes for grasping and fettering, craving ceases, grasping ceases, becoming ceases, and future rebirth ceases. Such is the ceasing of this entire mass of ill.

Seeing this, the well instructed Ariyan disciple is detached from material shapes [including his own body]; he is detached from the objects of sense, from feelings, and perceptions, he is detached from the mental formations and from consciousness.

Being so detached, he is not attracted, and he becomes equanimous and therefore set free, and the knowledge about freedom he has. And he

knows that rebirth is exhausted for him, the Holy life lived, done is the task, for life in these conditions there is no hereafter.<sup>xi</sup>

In the Buddha's day many hermits, ascetics, scholars and philosophers of different sects held various views and blind beliefs about the origin of the world and of the mind and body: Is the soul different from the body, is the soul eternal, what happens to an Enlightened being after death, and so on? They would periodically come to the Buddha to try and assert their views or argue on some point of controversy, or simply just to get the Buddha's opinion about it. However, the Buddha would not answer those kinds of questions directly. He very well knew the answer to all those inquiries, but he said that knowing those types of things were irrelevant to what he was teaching, and that was suffering, its cause, its cessation, and the way to its cessation.

The following are a few discussions between the Buddha and some of these inquirers.

Now one time a wandering ascetic, Pottapada, came to the Blessed One and asked the following questions:

“Master Gotama, is the soul the same as the body, or is the soul one thing and the body another?”

“That, Pottapada, is a matter on which I have expressed no opinion.”

“Then, Sir, tell me at least: Is the world eternal?”

“That again, Pottapada, is a matter on which I have expressed no opinion.”

“Then, Sir, is the world not eternal?”

“That, again, Pottapada, is a matter on which I have expressed no opinion.”

“Then Sir, is the world finite? Is the world infinite? Does one who attains to Truth live again after death? Does he not live after death?”

And to each of these questions the Blessed One answered: “That, too, Pottapada, is a matter on which I have expressed no opinion.”

“But why has Master Gotama expressed no opinion as to the questions that I have asked?”

“Because, Pottapada, these questions are not calculated to profit. They are not connected with the Dhamma. They do not conduce to right conduct, nor to detachment, contentment, nor to quietude, nor to tranquilization of heart. They do not lead to the purification of lusts or attachments, nor do they lead to right insight and real knowledge which destroy the cankers that bind. They lead not to Nibbana. Therefore it is that I have expressed no opinions about them.”

“Then just what is it that the Master Gotama has determined?”

“I have realized and expounded, Pottapada, suffering. I have realized and expounded the arising and continuation of suffering. I have realized and expounded the cessation of this very suffering. I have expounded the way [to live, think, and meditate] which leads to the cessation of suffering.”

“And why has Master Gotama put forth a statement as to that?”

“Because that, Pottapada, is calculated to profit, is connected with the Dhamma, it conduces to right conduct, to detachment, to purification of lusts, to quietude, to tranquilization of heart, to insight and real knowledge which destroy the cankers that bind. It conduces to Nibbana. Therefore it is, Pottapada, that I have expounded statements as to that.”

And Pottapada was pleased and satisfied with these words of the Blessed One.<sup>xii</sup>

There was a monk named Malunkyaputta who even vowed to quit the monk life, disrobe, if the Buddha would not tell him the answer to those same questions. The Buddha answered him beautifully by saying that he was like a man who, when shot by a poisoned arrow and suffering intensely, refused to have it pulled out until he knew the name of the man who shot it, where he lived, what his father’s occupation was, what kind of bow was used, what kind of wood was used for the arrow, what kind of feathers were used, and so on. That man would die before he could ever get the answers to his questions.<sup>xiii</sup>

Once the Blessed One was staying in a forest with the order of monks and he took up a handful of leaves in one hand and said to the monks:

“Now what do you think, monks, which are the greater, these few leaves that I hold in my hand or all the leaves that are in this great forest?”

“Few in number, Lord, are the leaves that are in the hand of the Blessed One. Far greater in number are the leaves that are in the whole forest.”

“Just so, monks, those things that I know by my super knowledge, but have not revealed, are far greater in number than those things that I have revealed. And why have I not revealed them? Because they do not conduce to profit, are not connected with living the Holy Life, do not tend to dispassion, to turning away, to tranquilization of heart. They do not lead to insight, to destroying the cankers that bind, to Nibbana. That is why I have not revealed them.<sup>xiv</sup><sup>8</sup>”

One time the wandering ascetic, Timbaruka, came up to the Blessed One, greeted him, exchanged courtesies, and sat down at one side. So seated, he spoke thus to the Blessed One: “Now then, Master Gotama, is pleasure and pain brought about by oneself?”

“Not so, Timbaruka.”

“Well then, are they brought by another?”

“Not so, Timbaruka.”

“Well then, are they brought about by both oneself and by another, or are they brought about neither by oneself nor by another?”

“Not so, Timbaruka.”

“How then, Master Gotama, is there no such thing as pleasure or pain?”

“Nay, Timbaruka, there is pleasure and pain.”

“How then, Master Gotama, to all my questions you have said, ‘Not so, Timbaruka,’ and being asked as to the existence of pleasure and pain you affirm that they exist, are known and seen by you. Declare to me then, Master Gotama, the truth about pleasure and pain.”

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<sup>8</sup> Chapter XII, 56 *Saccasamyutta* (Connected Discourses on the Truths) of the Connected Discourses of the Buddha (A Translation of the Samyutta Nikaya by Bhikkhu Bodhi) does not address the handful of leaves. (Noted by Dhammavamsa)

“Timbaruka, the experience and he who experiences the result are one and the same — this which you at first called ‘pleasure and pain brought about by oneself’ — this I declare is not so.

“The experience and he who experiences the result are different one from the other — this that you say, ‘pleasure and pain brought about by another’ — this I declare is not so.

“To you, Timbaruka, the Tathagata, not approaching either extreme, teaches the middle way: Conditioned by ignorance, the mental formations come to be; conditioned by the mental formations, consciousness comes to be; conditioned by consciousness, name-and-form come to be . . . conditioned by birth, sickness, sorrow, and suffering, old age, decay, and death come to be. Such is the arising of this entire mass of ill.

“But through the utter fading away and extinction of ignorance comes the cessation of the mental formations . . . consciousness . . . name-and-form . . . . and so on. Such is the ceasing of this entire mass of ill.”

When this had been said, Timbaruka, the wanderer, spoke thus to the Blessed One: “Most excellent, Lord! Most excellent! Just as if a man were to reveal that which was hidden away, or point out the right road to him who had gone astray, or were to bring a lamp into the darkness, so that those who had eyes could see shapes — even so has the Lord Gotama shown me his Dhamma in various ways. I, even I, Lord, betake myself to the Blessed One as my refuge, to the Dhamma and to the Sangha. May the Blessed One accept me as a follower, as one who from this day forth, as long as life lasts, has taken his refuge therein.”<sup>xv</sup>

One time the Brahmin, Janussoni, came into the presence of the Blessed One and exchanged greetings with him . . . So seated at one side the Brahmin, Janussoni, spoke thus to the Blessed One: “What say you here, Master Gotama, everything is?”

Everything is. This, Brahmin, is one extreme.”

“Well then, Master Gotama, nothing is?”

“Nothing is. This, Brahmin, is the other extreme.”

“The Tathagata, not approaching either of these extremes, teaches a doctrine of the middle way: Conditioned by ignorance arise the mental-

formations . . . arises consciousness . . . and so on. Such is the uprising of this entire mass of ill. But from the utter fading away and ceasing of ignorance the mental formations cease . . . consciousness ceases . . . and so on. Such is the ceasing of this entire mass of ill.”

And when the Blessed One had spoken thus, Janussoni the Brahmin said: “Wonderful, Master Gotama! . . . May the Blessed One accept me as your follower from today henceforth.”<sup>xvi</sup>

The following is a poem which describes nicely this cycle of cause and effect relationship.

The ego-consciousness, that’s what sorrow is,  
In delusion of such an existence  
Moves on performing actions through its will,  
And thereby comes the true impulse for conception,  
Causing mind and matter and the senses six,  
Seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching and mind,  
Within the wake of which is born contact;  
And that contact brings sensations sure,  
Which make us crave and become attached;  
Whence springeth action-foraging kamma  
Which when at death rushes for rebirth,  
The cause of pain, sorrow, sickness, aging, decay and death,  
And on and on it forever unceasingly goes.  
“This train of thought the Buddha did rehearse;  
And he did further muse;  
When they (the five aggregates) are not,  
How one would then be free from rebirth;  
How when ignorance of sorrow, its cause, its destruction,  
And to destroy it, the way, is known;  
Then ceases those actions good and bad to be;  
And when they cease to be,  
That driving impulse for conception also wanes and ceases;  
Thus weaning the ego from mind and matter,  
And how when there ariseth not, mind and matter,



There doth cease the senses six;  
Doth cease contact without which  
Sensations fail to arise, waning the craving,  
Which not being, actions doth cease,  
Thus extinguishing the feeding of that kammic force  
Which wanes and is extinguished all future rebirths,  
Pain, sorrow, sickness, old age, decay and death.  
The end of Samsara!"<sup>xvii</sup>

Monks, deep indeed is this causal law, and deep indeed it appears. It is through not knowing, not comprehending, not penetrating with right insight this doctrine of causation, that this generation of beings has become entangled like a ball of string, covered with glue, like unto a swamp of munja-grass and rushes; unable to overpass the doom of the waste, the woeful way, the downfall, the constant faring on in the rounds of birth and death.<sup>xviii</sup>

Whether Tathagatas appear in the world or not, it still remains a fact, a firm and necessary condition of existence, that all formations are conditionally arising, constantly changing, a source for suffering and devoid of selfhood.

A Tathagata fully awakens to this fact and penetrates it. Having fully awakened and penetrated it, he announces it, teaches it, makes it known, expounds it in detail, and makes it plain: *that all formations are impermanent, liable to suffering, and devoid of self-nature.*"<sup>xix</sup>

By him, who knows not, who sees not as they really are: decay and death, birth, becoming, grasping, craving, feeling, contact, the sense spheres, name-and-form, consciousness, the mental formations, by him a teacher should be sought for knowledge about them, and about the way going to the ceasing of them. And training must be done, practice must be done, will must be exerted, there must be no turning back. There must be ardor, energy, perseverance, mindfulness, understanding, and there must be earnestness. This is the training to be done, to put a complete end to ill.

**THE WAY TO PEACE AND HAPPINESS**  
**Chapter II: The Second Noble Truth**

What should be done by a teacher out of compassion has been done by me [teaching them these things]; here are the roots of trees, here remote, solitary, and empty places.

Do ye meditate, monks, do not be remorseful later on. This is my instruction to you.<sup>xx</sup>



## CHAPTER III KAMMA AND REBIRTH

### KAMMA

The word *kamma* (*karma* in Sanskrit) means action or volition. *Kamma* is generally used as a designation of the law of cause and effect operating through actions. It is the conscious, intended actions a person performs by his physical body, verbal speech, and his thoughts. The impressions or memory of these actions, or *kamma*, are recorded, so to speak, in the subconscious mind. We use these accumulated tendencies as a base for our present and future decisions and actions of body, speech, and thought, which are the *kamma* resultants, or the residual impressions, of all our past kammic activity. Because of this we are conditioned to experience the sense objects of this world, and to feel, desire, crave, grasp, and become in a similar manner as in the past. Thus we get enmeshed and rooted in strong habit patterns of bodily actions, verbal speech, and thinking, from which it is difficult, but not impossible, to get free.

Thus we see that *kamma*, the law of cause and effect, is a strict accountant. It sees to it that no one will escape the results of his deeds, the reason for this being that the accumulated residue of these deeds and thoughts in turn becomes the very storehouse or basis for our future experiences. Each person weaves his own web of fate, whether good or bad, pleasant or painful. Each person is the architect of his own future.

This is in contrast to the idea of an almighty God who acts as an external agent in judging a person's deeds at death, and who accordingly sentences that person to eternal pleasure in heaven or eternal suffering in hell. In a way, the law of *kamma* is God in this sense, because it creates the appropriate, fitting, future circumstances to accommodate a being's mental vibration at that time. If the mind is one with hate, lust, greed, etc., then accordingly it is attracted to and manifests the conditions in which it will

satisfy itself in those pursuits. If the mind is one with love, compassion, kindness, detachment, happiness, etc., then in the same way it will be attracted to, and manifest itself in, the appropriate conditions.

The Awakened One has summed it up in the following verses.

All beings are the owners of their deeds.  
They are the heirs of their deeds;  
Their deeds are the womb from which they spring.  
With their deeds they are bound up;  
Their deeds are their refuge.  
Whatever deeds they do — good or bad —  
Of such they will be the heir.<sup>i</sup>

It is *kamma* which makes the world go round.  
*Kamma* keeps moving on the lives of men.  
All beings to *kamma* are bound  
As a linchpin to the chariot wheel.<sup>ii</sup>

Mind is the forerunner of all conditions;  
Mind is chief, all things are mind-made;  
If one acts or speaks with an evil mind,  
Then ill effects will follow, just as the wheel  
Of the cart follows the hoof of the ox that pulls it.  
But if one acts or speaks with a pure, wholesome mind,  
Then happiness and ease follow that person  
Just as his shadow which never leaves him.<sup>iii</sup>

Neither in the sky, nor in mid-ocean, nor in a mountain cave,  
Is found that place on earth where, living,  
One can escape from the consequences of an evil deed.<sup>iv</sup>

The following is part of a discourse by the Buddha to his close disciple, Ananda.

Where there have been deeds, Ananda, personal weal and woe arise in consequence of the will [intention] there was in the deed. Where there has been speech, where there has been thought, personal weal and woe arise in consequence of the will there was in speech, and in the thought. Either we ourselves, Ananda, plan those deeds conditioned [under the influence of] ignorance and craving, from which arise personal weal and woe, or others plan those deeds that we do [under their urging or suggestion] because of ignorance and craving, from which arise personal weal and woe.

Either we do them deliberately or we do them unwittingly [not knowing the consequences], from which in either way arises personal weal and woe.

So also it is where there has been speech or thought. Either we plan and do it or others plan it and we do it, from which arises personal weal and woe.

In all these cases ignorance is followed after [because of ignorance, deeds are done]. But from the utter fading away and extinction of ignorance and craving [by wisdom], those deeds, that speech, those thoughts, Ananda, are not performed from which would bring one personal weal and woe.<sup>v</sup>

(The kammic energy is thus decreased and ceases so that the results one would have had to experience therefrom are also weakened and cut off.)

When *kamma* is referred to as a law, it does not mean something promulgated by the state or some governing body. That would imply the existence of a law giver. It is a law in the sense that it is a constant way of action. It is in the nature of actions that they should produce certain results. That nature is also called law.

It is in this sense that we speak of the law of gravitation which causes a fruit on a tree to fall to the ground when it is over-ripe. There is no supreme power or being which commands the fruit to fall, but again, it is a constant way of action.

And so it is in human affairs, where that same law of cause and effect works in the same way. No independent, creative power is involved: natural law dictates that human acts, too, give rise to specific consequences. Therefore all states, be they physical or mental, occur in natural sequence dependent upon natural law, so that when a person dies, as we all must, the occurrence is nothing more than an effect of its cause, which is birth. Ignorant of causes, we speak of “chance,” yet we know that the world is not governed by chaos. Therefore our coming into the world and leaving it again is by no means arbitrary, any more than is the sprouting and inevitable destruction of a tree.

## **REBIRTH**

All of our past actions of body, speech and thought, all of the feelings, perceptions, mental formations, etc., that we have ever experienced, have left their impression in our subconscious life-continuum. The ordinary person, however, is usually too occupied with busying himself and paying too much attention to the present world about him, or he is creating fantasies about the future. In this way, the access to his subconscious memory, wherein lies all these impressions from the past, including past lifetimes, is extremely limited and confined. This is why most people cannot remember much of their past, say five or ten years before, except for main experiences, let alone the impressions from previous lives. Nonetheless, these are still impressed in the subconscious.

Even today in several countries like India, Tibet, and Sri Lanka there are quite a few people who remember one or more lives. Some of these have been described in very precise detail and have been closely examined and verified to be extra-ordinarily believable.<sup>vi</sup> Also there are cases of hypnosis in which the subject has been taken back into time, even as far as past lives, and has remembered things in quite extraordinary detail.

If, at the time of death, a person is still involved in the Kamma producing process of craving, grasping, and becoming, then this built up grasping

force (the sankhara) will manifest for its use in another existence, another body with sense organs. At the moment of death the mind normally is attracted to a plane of existence which accords with the personality as expressed in accumulated habits and tendencies. This consciousness, which arises at the last moment before death, takes an object normally produced in the mind, or, which is induced from outside, as its “sign of destiny” (*gati nimitta*) or drawing card. This “sign of destiny” is usually in accordance with the strongest habitual tendencies which were exercised during the lifetime now ending. It usually conditions the realm of rebirth where the mind will re-manifest itself.

Sometimes, however, this sign is the result of some heavy negative action which was committed one, two, three, or even more lifetimes previous to this one. But only now is it coming to the surface to determine the future plane of existence.<sup>vii</sup>

This consciousness, termed “re-linking consciousness” (*patisandhi-vinnana*), which manifests in another existence, carries with it, so to speak, all the *sankharas*, or habitual tendencies of the mind, that were accumulated in the past due to ignorance and grasping, and which are not exhausted.

On the night of the Buddha’s Great Enlightenment, when he was in deep meditation, his awareness was free of all outside disturbances and mental wandering, perfectly stilled and quiet. He then had access to his entire storehouse of kammic impressions from the past. Thus he was able to recall perfectly, in exact detail, all of his previous actions of body, speech, and thought, all of his experiences right back to the moment he was born. Then he even could recall the last thought in his previous life (the re-linking consciousness) and he continued right on in reverse order remembering each and every thought, feeling, perception, and action in previous lives.

He could recall backwards in this fashion through hundreds and thousands of his past existences as his mental energy or kammic force, at that time being under the delusion of “self,” traversed the infinite rounds of birth and death. In this way he perfectly saw the reasons and conditions why the

kammic force manifested and re-manifested itself the way it did — now here on earth as a human being or an animal, another time as a hungry ghost, another time in hell, then again as a human being, a rich prosperous king or a destitute wretch, or born blind, deaf, or mentally retarded, or born in the heavenly world of devas or Brahmas, etc. The following is an account and vivid description given by the Buddha himself of how he realized all of this directly on the night of his Awakening.

Thus with the mind composed, quite purified, quite clarified, without blemish, without defilement, grown soft and workable, fixed, immovable, I directed my mind to the knowledge and recollection of former habitations. I remembered a variety of former habitations thus: one birth, two births, three . . . four . . . five . . . ten . . . twenty . . . thirty . . . fifty . . . a hundred . . . a thousand . . . a hundred thousand births, and many an aeon of the world's integration and disintegration. Such a one was I by name, having such and such a family, having such and such a color, so was I nourished, such and such pleasant and painful experiences were mine, so did the span of life end. Passing from this, I came to be in another state when such a one was I by name, having such and such a family, such and such color, so was I nourished having such and such pleasant and painful experiences, so did the span of life end. Passing from this I arose here. Thus did I remember many diverse habitations in all their modes and details. This, monks, was the first knowledge realized by me in the first watch of the night. Ignorance was dispelled, knowledge arose; darkness was dispelled, light arose; even as I abided diligent, ardent, self-resolute and calm.

Then with the mind composed, quite purified . . . pliable, fixed, immovable, I directed my mind to the knowledge of the passing hence and the arising of beings. With the purified Deva-vision surpassing that of normal men, I saw beings as they pass from this plane [die] and come to be reborn; I comprehended that beings are mean, excellent, comely, ugly, well-going, beautiful, according to the consequences of their deeds, and I thought: Indeed these worthy beings who were possessed of wrong conduct in body, speech and thought, scoffers at religious men, holding wrong views, incurring deeds consequent on those wrong views



— these, at the breaking up of the body after dying, have arisen in a sorrowful state, a bad bourn, the abyss, Niraya Hell. But these worthy beings who were possessed of good conduct in body, speech and thought, who sought advice and instruction from wise men, practicing what is good, having right views, incurring deeds consequent on those right views — these beings, at the breaking up of the body after dying, have arisen in a good bourn, a heaven world. Thus did I see with purified Deva-vision surpassing that of men, the arising and passing away of beings according to their *kamma*. This was the second knowledge realized by me in the middle watch of the night. Ignorance was dispelled, knowledge arose; darkness was dispelled, light arose, even as I abided diligent, ardent, self-resolute, and mindful.<sup>viii</sup>

This rebirth should not be misunderstood as some type of a permanent substance or individual “soul” which transmigrates from body to body, from this world to the next. It is merely the breaking up of the five aggregates, the separation of the body and mind, so that they no longer function as a unit, supporting each other. The mind has to have a body through which to function and satisfy its desires. When the last consciousness of the dying life re-links itself in another existence, for example, in the womb of a human mother or an animal, then another body with sense organs is developed under the influence of the *sankhara* that are carried over with the re-linking consciousness. Thus the five aggregates can once again come together to continue the chain of sensory experiences, once again going through the rounds of birth, sickness, suffering, old age, and death, so on and so forth, ad infinitum.

Following are a few items from *The Questions of King Milinda* concerning this rebirth phenomenon.

“Nagasena, why is it that ‘name’ [mind] is not reborn separately from ‘form’ [body]. Why must they be born together?”

“Because, O King, these conditions, name and form, are connected with one another and spring into being together. As a hen would not get a yoke or an egg shell separately, but both would arise in one egg, the

two being intimately dependent on one another, just so, if there were no 'name' there would be no 'form,' it is the form's name. If there is no form, then what is the use of a name? What is meant by name in that expression, being intimately dependent on what is meant by form, they spring up together, and this is, through time immemorial, their nature."<sup>ix</sup>

"He who is reborn, Nagasena, does he remain the same or become another?"

"Neither the same nor another, O King."

"Give me an illustration, Nagasena."

"Now what do you think, O King? You were once a baby, a tender thing, and small in size, lying flat on your back. Was that the same person as you who are grown up now?"

"No, that child was one thing, I am another."

"Is the person who goes to school one and same when he has finished his schooling, or another? Is it one who commits a crime, and another who is punished by having his hands or feet cut off?"

"Certainly not, Nagasena, But what would you, Sir, say to that?"

"I should say, O King, that I am the same person, now that I am grown up, as I was when I was a tender, tiny baby. I am the same person who starts and finishes school. It is the same person who commits a crime and is punished. For all these states are included in one by means of this body."

"Give me an illustration, Sir."

"O King, suppose a man were to light a lamp and it burns the whole night through. Now is it the same flame that burns in the first watch of the night as in the second watch, or is it the same flame that burns in the second watch as in the third watch of the night?"

"No, Nagasena, the flame comes from the same lamp all the night through."

"Just so, O King, there is the continuity of a person or thing that is maintained. One comes into being, another passes away; and the rebirth is, as it were, simultaneous. Thus neither as the same nor as another does a man go on to the last phase of his 'self-I-consciousness'."

“O King, it is like milk, which once taken from the cow, turns after a lapse of time, first to curds, and then from curds to butter, and then from butter to ghee. Now, would it be right to say that the milk was the same thing as the curds, or the butter or ghee?”

“Certainly not, Nagasena, but they are produced out of it.”

“Just so, O King, is the continuity of a person or thing maintained. One comes into being, another passes away, and the rebirth is, as it were, simultaneous. Thus neither as the same nor as another does a being go on to the last phase of his self-consciousness.”<sup>x</sup>

“Where there is no transmigration (of a soul), Nagasena, can there be rebirth?”

“Yes, there can. Suppose, O King, a man were to light a lamp from another lamp; can it be said that the flame transmigrates from one lamp to another?”

“Certainly not, Sir”

“Just so, O King, is rebirth accomplished without any transmigration (of soul). Further, do you remember having learnt a verse, when you were a boy, from your teacher?”

King: “Yes, I remember having learnt many.”

“Well then, did those verses transmigrate to you from your teacher?”

“Certainly not, Sir!”

“Just so, O King, is rebirth accomplished without transmigration.”<sup>xi</sup>

“What is it that is reborn?”

“Name and form is reborn.”

“Is it this same name and form which is reborn?”

“No, but by this name and form, *kamma* is produced, good and evil, and by those deeds another name and form is reborn.”

“If that be so, Sir, would not the new being be released from the evil *kamma* produced in the last life?”

“No. Suppose, O King, a man were to steal a mango from a mango tree, and the man who planted the tree caught him and brought him before you to be judged for the crime. Suppose the thief were to say: ‘Your majesty, I have not taken this man’s mango. The tree he planted in

the ground as a seed is different now and not the same. I do not deserve to be punished!’ O King, would you sentence that man guilty and to be punished?”

“Certainly, Sir, he would be guilty and deserve to be punished because in spite of whatever he might say, still the mango that he took from the tree came from the one the owner had planted in the ground as a seed and which he cared for.”

“Just so, O King, deeds good and evil are done by this same name and form, and another is reborn. But that succeeding being is not free or released from the *kamma* generated in the past existences.

“Or suppose a man in a forest left a burning oil lamp in order to go fetch water, and a deer runs past and knocks over the lamp, thus setting a fire and burning down the whole forest. Would that man be responsible for the burning down of the forest?”

“Yes, because no matter what he might say, the forest fire was produced by the flame of the oil lamp left by the man.”

“In just that way, O King, it is one name and form which dies (the oil lamp) and another name and form (the forest fire) is produced. The forest fire is the result of the flame in the oil lamp, therefore he is guilty of burning down the forest.”<sup>xii</sup>

The Buddha has accredited the cause and condition of all this running and faring on from existence to existence, from this world to the next world, to be sensuous craving, hatred, and delusion. This is illustrated in the following discourses.

“Verily, monks, due to sensuous craving, conditioned by sensuous craving, impelled, entirely moved by sensuous craving, kings fight with kings, princes with princes, priests with priests, citizens with citizens, and farmers with farmers. Mothers quarrel with sons, the son with the mother; father quarrels with son, son with the father; brother quarrels with brother, sister with sister, brother with sister; and friend quarrels with friend. Thus given to dissension, quarreling, and fighting, promoted by sensuous craving, they fall upon one another, with fists, sticks, or weapons, and thereby they suffer death or deadly pain.

And further, due to sensuous craving, people break into houses, rob, plunder, pillage whole houses, commit highway robbery, and seduce the wives of others. Then the rulers have such people caught and inflict on them various forms of punishment. And thereby they incur death or deadly pain. Now, this is the misery of sensuous craving, the heaping up of suffering in this present life, due to sensuous craving.

And, further, people take to the evil way in deeds, words, and thoughts; and thus, at the dissolution of the body after death, they fall into a downward state of existence, a state of suffering, into perdition, and the abyss of hell. But this is the misery of sensuous craving, the heaping up of suffering in the future, due to sensuous craving.”<sup>xiii</sup>

“Monks, there are three root-conditions involved in the doing of actions, namely: greed (*lobha*), hate (*dosa*), and delusion (*moha*). The action that is done out of greed, out of hatred, out of delusion, that has arisen through greed, hatred, and delusion, produced by greed, hate, and delusion — this action will ripen wherever the being is reborn; and wherever the action ripens, there the being reaps the fruit of the action, be it in this life or in the next life, or in future lives.

It is just with unhurt and unspoiled seeds, undamaged by wind and sun, healthy and well preserved, which, after being sown in rich soil and a well prepared ground, will, owing to plentiful rain, shoot up, attain growth and full development.”<sup>xiv</sup>

The destroying of living beings, the taking of other men’s belongings, unlawful sexual indulgence, lying, cheating, talebearing, harsh, vulgar language, vain prattle and empty talk, the taking of intoxicating drinks or drugs which lead to heedlessness and so forth, if committed, carried out, and often practiced, lead to rebirth in hell, or the animal world, or the realm of hungry ghosts. Even the least result of any of these things leads one to unfortunate circumstances even if reborn as a human being.

Beings are the owners and heirs of their actions . . . actions divide beings into lofty and low.

There is one, woman or man, who destroys living beings, is cruel, addicted to beating and killing, without love for living things. Through

such actions, however carried out or undertaken, this person, at the dissolution of the body at death, will fall into a low state of existence, a woeful course of life, into perdition or hell . . . or, if reborn as a human being, he will, wherever it may be, be of short life.

And he is creeping in his actions by body, speech, and thought. Hidden are his works, words, and thoughts; hidden are his ways and possessions. But I tell you, monks, whoever pursues hidden ways and objects will have to expect one of these two results: either torment in hell or birth amongst the creeping animals.

There is one who has the habit of causing pain to others by means of fist, stone, stick, or sword. Through such actions he will fall into a low state . . . or if, reborn as a human being, he will, wherever it may be, have much sickness.

There is one who is hot tempered, flies quickly into a rage; at the slightest thing told to him he gets into frenzy and is angry, stubborn, shows excitement, hatred, and suspicion. Through such actions he will fall into a low state . . . or, if reborn as a human being, he will have an ugly appearance.

There is one who is envious, full of jealousy and animosity. He feels envy at that which others receive as gifts, hospitality, honor, veneration, respectful salutation, and gracious offerings. Through such actions or thoughts he will fall into a low state . . . or, if reborn as a human being, he will, wherever it may be, possess only little influence.

There is one who is haughty and full of vanity. He does not salute whom he should, nor rise before whom he should, nor respect or honor those whom it is due, nor make gifts to those to whom gifts should be made. Through such actions he will fall into a low state . . . or, if reborn as a human, he will, wherever it may be, be of low birth.

There is one who does not visit holy and wise men and put to them questions such as: “What, O Venerable Sir, is kammically wholesome, what kammically unwholesome, what is blameworthy, what is blameless? What should one practice and what not? Which practice will lead me for a long time to harm and suffering and which to happiness and blessing?”

Through not gaining the help and advice of wise men, remaining in darkness as to these things, he will fall into a low state of existence . . . or, if reborn as a human being, he will, wherever it may be, be of low intelligence.<sup>xv</sup>

The following is a story of two monks in the time of the Buddha who had clairvoyant vision and were descending a certain hill, where they were currently dwelling, to enter the village below to start their alms round.

Now the venerable Moggallana, as he was descending the hill and passing a certain place, smiled. Then the venerable Lakkhana said to him, “What is the reason. what is the cause, friend Moggallana, that just now you gave a smile?”

“Just now, friend Lakkhana, as I was descending, I saw a skeleton<sup>xvi</sup> going through the air, and vultures, crows, and falcons kept flying after it, pecking at its ribs, pulling it apart while it uttered cries of pain. To me, friend, came this thought: ‘O but this is wonderful, this is marvelous, and that a person will come to have such a shape [predicament].’<sup>xvii</sup> This being was a cattle-butcher [in a past life] in this very village of Rajagaha. He, by the effect of that work, suffered for many a long year in purgatory, and now by the remaining effect of that, he has acquired a personality [existence as a peta] of this kind.

“On different days: . . . I saw a man sunk up to his head in a dung pit. That being was an adulterer . . . I saw a man sunk in a dung pit eating dung with both hands. That being was a Brahmin. He, in the time of Kassapa Buddha, had invited the order of monks to a meal. Then letting their bowls be filled with dung, he said: ‘O, let my masters eat their fill and carry the rest away! . . . I saw the headless trunk of a man going through the air; his eyes and mouth were on his chest. That being was a bandit named Harika . . . I saw a monk going through the air, his robe, his girdle, his bowl, and also his body were on fire, burning and blazing and he was uttering cries of pain and distress. This was an evil-living monk during the time of the Buddha Kassapa . . . To me, friend came

this thought: ‘O but this is wonderful, this is marvelous, that such a person will come to have such a shape.’”

Then the Buddha addressed the monks: “Monks, live the life of vision that of insight, since a disciple will know or will see or will testify to things like this. I also, monks, have seen these things before now. These people had been evil doers in their former lives here in Rajagaha. But by the effects of their evil-doing (akusala-kamma), they have suffered for many a long year in purgatory. Now, by the remaining effect of these deeds, they have acquired personalities to suit that kind.

“Thus, monks, do you be heedful in your thoughts, speech. and actions, lest you should wind up, after the break up of the body after death, in a similar predicament.”<sup>xviii</sup>

“Thus it is with the rebirth of beings: according to their actions they will be reborn. And having been reborn they will experience the result of their actions. Therefore I declare: *beings are the owners and heirs of their deeds, their deeds are the womb from which they spring; with their deeds they are bound up, their deeds are their refuge. Whatever deeds they do, whether good or evil, of such they will be the heir.*”<sup>xix</sup>

Monks, suppose a cloth were stained and dirty, and a dyer dipped it in some dye or paint or other. Whether blue or yellow or red or pink, it would take badly and be impure in color. And why is that? Because the cloth was not clean. So too, when the mind is defiled, an unhappy destination in a future existence may be expected.



And what are the defilements of the mind?

Covetousness and unrighteous greed are defilements of the mind. Envy, jealousy, hypocrisy, deceit, obstinacy, presumptuousness, and conceit are defilements of the mind. Arrogance, vanity and negligence are defilements of the mind.

But, monks, suppose a cloth were clean and bright and a dyer dipped it in some dye . . . it would take well and be pure in color. And why is that? Because the cloth was clean. So too, when the mind is pure and



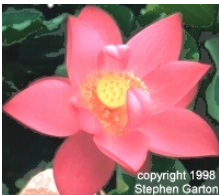
free of defilements, a happy destination in a future existence may well be expected.<sup>xx</sup>

However, nothing said here should be taken to imply absolute predestination, revoking the need to worry about anything, to bother about doing good or refraining from evil. We can not obliterate all our past accumulated impressions. We can, however, begin now to check and control the present input of fresh unwholesome *kamma* which would give rise later to pain or discomfort. We can lessen the effect of past unwholesome *kamma* by now performing and accumulating much wholesome *kamma*. This can help to a great extent to counteract or weaken the effects of the unwholesome, and will condition happiness and comfortable situations to arise in the future.

The Buddha has also said that it is very difficult and rare to obtain a rebirth into the world of human beings. That is because of the way sentient beings are distributed throughout the samsaric realms. The number of human beings is only a slight fraction of the total numbers of beings in the heavens, hells, or existing as animals and spirits. The following suttas describe the difficulty and rarity of having a human birth.

### **TIP OF THE NAIL**

Then the Blessed One took up on his thumbnail a little spot of sand and addressed the monks as follows: “What do you think, monks? Which is greater, this little spot of sand on my thumbnail or all of the sand in all the oceans?”



“Lord, all of the sand in all the oceans is greater. A trifle is the little spot of sand lifted by the Blessed One onto his thumbnail. It cannot come into reckoning, it cannot come into comparison, it cannot form a fraction when compared with all the sand in all the oceans — this little spot of sand on the Blessed One’s nail.”

“Even so, monks, are the beings that are reborn among humans, few in number compared against the greater number that are reborn elsewhere

and not among humans.”<sup>xxi</sup>

## **THE SEA TURTLE**

At one time the Blessed One told the following story.

“There is, monks, in the depths of the great ocean, a blind turtle, and he swims about incessantly in any direction, wherever his head may lead. There is also the hub of a cart wheel, a wooden ring, which is ceaselessly floating about on the surface of the great ocean, being (carried about in all directions by the tide, current and wind.

“Now the sea turtle comes to the surface for air only once in a hundred years. And perchance it happens that that small wooden ring is at the precise place and time where and when the blind turtle comes to the surface of the ocean, and he pokes his head right through the center of that hub.

“Now, monks, is it possible that this might happen?”

“It seems impossible, Lord, in ordinary truth; but time being so vast, it may be admitted that perhaps at some time or other that occurrence might take place, provided that the blind turtle lives long enough and the wooden hub does not rot and break up before such a coincidence comes to pass.”

“The occurrence of such a strange thing, monks, is not to be counted a difficult one; for there is still a greater, a harder, a hundred times, a thousand times more difficult thing than this. And what is that?

“It is the obtaining of the opportunity to be reborn into the human world, to obtain a human rebirth again after having once lost it and been reborn into any of the lower realms of misery. The occurrence of the uniting of the turtle’s head with the wooden hub is not worth mentioning as a difficult thing in comparison with this, because only those who perform good deeds and abstain from doing evil can obtain existence in the world of men and gods. The beings in the lower world cannot discern what is virtuous and what is not virtuous, what is meritorious and what is not, and consequently they live a life of immortality and demerit, tormenting one another with all their power. Therefore, monks, the

opportunity of being reborn as a human being, after having fallen into one of the lower realms, is an extremely difficult and rare occurrence.<sup>xxii</sup>

The human realm of existence is the only place of all the various samsaric realms in which a being can practice the Dhamma in order to free himself from the incessant rounds of birth and death.



This is because in the lower realms — hell, the world of ghosts and disembodied spirits, and the animal world — the suffering is too great and the ignorance of those beings is too thick to be able to practice the morality and meditation which are necessary for Liberation. In the heavenly worlds there is too much sensual pleasure and preoccupation. The beings in those realms see no need to practice because they are strangers to suffering and cannot know that their bliss is only temporary. In the formless worlds the beings are mainly semi-conscious; they cannot think or reason, so it is impossible for them to practice Dhamma.

In the human world there is a balance of both pleasure and pain, and humans have the ability to reason and to experience what is wholesome and what is unwholesome from the point of view of cause and effect. We also have the opportunity to come into contact with the Dhamma Teachings and to visit wise and learned men who can teach and inspire us.

In the other realms that is extremely difficult and unlikely. We should therefore realize that this opportunity of having a human birth is very fortunate and rare. We should make the best use of this life by earnestly making the effort to study and put into practice the various essentials of Dhamma — morality, mental purification, and the development of wisdom. This will steadily accumulate and secure us from the possibility of rebirth into the lower realms of misery, and will lead us eventually to Enlightenment and Liberation from samsara.

These rounds of repeated existence, samsara, are well illustrated by a few of the Buddha's discourses.

Incalculable is the beginning of this faring on. The earliest point is not revealed of the running, the constant faring on of beings cloaked in ignorance and tied by craving.

Just as a stick, thrown up into the air, falls sometimes on the butt end, sometimes on its side, sometimes on the tip, even so do beings obstructed by ignorance and fettered by craving and attachment migrate and go the rounds of birth and death, at one time going from this world [of humans] to another world, and at another time coming from another world to this world. Thus for a long time, monks, have you and I experienced suffering, pain, and death and the cemeteries have swelled, long enough for you to have become wearied, dispassionate, detached, and released from all conditioned things.

For many a long year, monks, have ye experienced the death of mother, son, of daughter; have ye experienced the ruin of kinsfolk, of wealth, of possessions; have ye experienced the calamity of sickness, famine, floods, have been overcome with lamentation, grief, and despair. Greater is the flood of tears shed by you — crying and weeping over one and all of these, as ye fare on, run and circle on in this way for many a long year, being afflicted with the undesirable and separated from the desirable — greater than are the waters in the four great oceans.

For many a long year did blood flow, was blood shed by the loss of your heads when ye were seized as robbers, village-plunderers, adulterers, murderers — more blood than there are waters in the four great oceans. For many a long year did blood flow by the loss of your heads when ye were born as oxen, buffaloes, rams, goats, chickens, as wild beasts, as fowl, as swine — more blood than there is water in the four great oceans.

Thus many a long aeon, have ye been suffering ill, pain, disaster, and death, and the burial grounds have swelled. Thus far enough for you to be detached from all the things of the world, enough to lose all passion and attachment for them, enough to be delivered from them.

Not an easy thing is it to find a being who during, this many a long aeon, has not at one time or another been your mother, father, brother, sister, son, daughter, or friend, etc. If a man were to make this great

earth into clay balls each the size of a corn kernel, and he were to lay them down side by side saying, ‘This is my father, this is my father’s father,’ and so on, this great earth would be sooner used up, be no more, before the fathers of that man’s father were to come to an end. Why is that? Because incalculable is the beginning of this faring on, and the earliest point is not revealed of the constant running on, the faring on of beings cloaked in ignorance and tied by attachment and craving.<sup>xxiii</sup>

Now a certain one of the monks came to the Blessed One and asked:  
“How long, Lord, is an aeon?”

“Long, friend, is an aeon. It is not easy to reckon how long, saying so many years, so many centuries, and so many thousand centuries.”

“Can it be told, Lord, by a parable?”

“It can, friend. Suppose there were a great crag, a mountain one mile wide, one mile across, and one mile high, without chasms or clefts, a solid mass of rock. And suppose a man at the end of every hundred years were to stroke it once each time with a soft silk cloth. Well, that great mountain of rock in this way would be sooner rubbed and worn away and reduced to nothing, before an aeon of time had elapsed. So long, friend, is an aeon. And of aeons this long, more than one has passed, more than a hundred, more than a thousand, sand, more than a hundred thousand have passed. Not an easy thing is it to count them up. Why is that?”

“Incalculable is the beginning of this faring on, traversing through the rounds of birth and death . . .”

If of one single living being, during its hurrying and hastening for one single aeon through these rounds of birth and death, one were to heap up all the bones, and the bones were not to turn to dust, there would arise a pile of bones as big as this great mountain.”

“Thus for a long time, friend, have you experienced suffering, pain, and death and the cemeteries have swelled, long enough for you to have become wearied and dispassionate towards all conditioned things, long enough for you to have become detached and released therefrom.”

“When, monks, ye behold a hard lot [when you see persons and animals, sick, diseased, deformed, starving, being mistreated, and dying,

etc.] or that which is hard to bear, then ye should thus reflect: ‘We too, have suffered on this way down that long time.’”

“And also, when ye behold that which is prosperous and happy, etc., then ye should reflect: ‘We too have enjoyed on in this way a long time’ [but it always came to an end, and then suffering arose again]. Why is this?”

“Incalculable is the beginning of this faring on . . .”

“There will come a time when the mighty oceans will dry up, vanish, and turn to dust. There will come a time when the mighty earth will be devoured and consumed by fire, perish and be no more. But yet there will be no end to the suffering of beings who, obstructed by ignorance and ensnared by craving, are hurrying and hastening through this round of births and deaths, samsara.”<sup>xxiv</sup>

Monks, the law well proclaimed by me thus is frank, open, evident, and stripped of padding. In this law thus well made clear, any who have simply faith in this Dhamma, love for this Dhamma, who heed the instruction therein, are destined for heaven [not reborn into the lower worlds] at the least, or attain Nibbana.<sup>xxv</sup>

What should be done for the disciples out of compassion, by a teacher who seeks their welfare, that I have done for you [taught about *kamma* and rebirth and how to free oneself]. Here are the roots of trees, here are empty and quiet places. Meditate, monks, do not delay, lest you regret it later. This is my instruction to you.<sup>xxvi</sup>

Birth and death as explained herein describes mainly the successive existences in various bodies by which an individual unit of kamma-energized ‘I-consciousness’ manifests itself throughout its samsaric wanderings. In a deeper, more profound aspect, however, birth and death applies to the moment-to-moment arising and passing of the five-fold mass sense experience, of consciousness, at each successive mind-moment. This is birth and death in the true sense.

In the ultimate sense the life of living beings is extremely short, being only as long as the arising and passing away of each conscious moment.

Just as a chariot wheel, when rolling, rolls on only one point at a time, and when it rests, it rests on only one point. So, too, the life of a living being lasts only for a single conscious moment. When that conscious moment has ceased, the being is said to have ceased.

Life, person pleasure, pain; just these alone  
Join in one conscious moment that flicks by.  
Ceased aggregates of those dead or alive,  
Are all alike, gone never to return [in that exact way]  
No world [of sense experience] is born  
If consciousness does not arise;  
When consciousness is present, then it lives;  
When consciousness dissolves, the world is dead.<sup>xxvii<sup>9</sup></sup>

It is said that the Buddha could detect with his Wisdom-eye that consciousness arises and vanishes millions of times in the wink of an eye. If consciousness is happening that fast, it is no wonder that it appears to be one smooth-flowing phenomenon and that the feeling of ‘self’ or ‘I’ behind the process seems solid. It is like a reel of film passing through a projector and the movie being flashed upon the screen. Although the reel of film is made up of individual, separate frames, it gives the illusive appearance of being one long, continuous picture. This is why people are fooled into thinking that it is a permanent and substantial ‘I’ that is conscious. They fail to see the changing, fleeting nature of it as it really is. Only in meditation, with a calm but keen awareness, can this process be penetrated and a glimpse of the truth of this matter be realized. To put an end to the birth and death of the conditioned mind is to put an end to suffering, to regain the natural state of the mind, the Deathless, Nibbana.

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<sup>9</sup> This reference cannot be found in the *Path of Purification*, translated from Pali by Bhikkhu Nanamoli. (Noted by *Dhammavamsa*)

**THE WAY TO PEACE AND HAPPINESS**  
**Chapter III: Kamma and Rebirth**





## CHAPTER IV THE THIRD NOBLE TRUTH

The third Noble Truth which the Awakened One experienced on the night of his Enlightenment was the subsiding and virtually ceasing of Dukkha, the very cessation of the conditioned mind itself. By using the “Sword of Wisdom” the Buddha then and there cut away and destroyed totally, without remainder, the defilements in his mind and brought the deluded notion of the individual “I” to naught. His mind ceased to grasp or cling to anything — forms, feelings, perceptions, mental formations, or consciousness — or to any of the six kinds of sense stimuli. Thus did he realize Nibbana — the complete extinction of greed, hatred, and ignorance — the incomparable end of suffering. In this realization he came to know that for him that was his last conditioned life. His consciousness at the moment of death would no longer be able to find a footing in another samsaric existence.

This was the first utterance of the Buddha on his attainment of Enlightenment:

*Through many a long birth and death wandered I,  
Seeking but not finding the builder of this house [the body].  
Sorrowful is repeated birth.  
O house-builder [craving], you are seen!  
You shall build no house again.  
All your rafters [desire-attachment] are broken  
Your ridge-pole [“I”] is shattered.  
To dissolution [Nibbana] goes this mind.  
Achieved is the end of suffering [Dukkha].<sup>1</sup>*

Whosoever, O monks, in reality understands the eye, visible forms, eye-consciousness; the ear, sound, ear-consciousness; nose . . . tongue . . . body . . . mind, mind objects, and mind consciousness, such a wise one no more

craves for these things. Whosoever is without desire or attachment on experiencing any of these, in such a one the five aggregates of grasping come to extinction, and the rebirth-producing craving, accompanied by lust and greed, finding delight now here, now there — this craving vanishes in him. Also spiritual and mental depression and feverishness cease, and he experiences spiritual and mental happiness. This is the end of ill, this is Nibbana.<sup>ii</sup>

“Thus is Nibbana realizable even during life-time,  
Immediate, inviting one to come and see for himself,  
And comprehensible to the wise.  
In so far as one has realized the complete extinction  
Of greed, hate and delusion [in his own mind],  
It is this far that Nibbana is realizable,  
Immediate and experienced by the wise.”<sup>iii</sup>

When one can sever identification and attachment to the mind and body and relinquish the notion of a personal “self,” then the mind is not harassed and agitated by any assaults from outside or from within (Mara). The mind can then experience the non-worldly tranquility and happiness which lies beyond the range of the six senses. This is the spiritual realm of the mind where the thinking and conceptualizing activity powered by “I” is put into abeyance, where there is no duality of subject-object relationship. The Buddha has described this state of Nibbana:

There is, O monks, an Unborn, Unconditioned, Un-originated,  
Unformed.  
For if there were not this Unborn . . . Unformed.  
There would be no escape possible from the born, conditioned,  
originated and formed.  
But since, O monks, there is this Unborn, Unconditioned, Un-  
originated, Unformed [because he realized it],  
Therefore an escape is possible from the born . . . and formed.<sup>iv</sup>

This is peace, this is the sublime, namely: the stand-still of all kamma formations, the forsaking of all substrata of existence, the fading away of craving, detachment, extinction [of greed, hate, and delusion], Nibbana.<sup>v</sup>

There is, monks, a realm where the elements of earth, water, fire, and air find no footing [in the mind]. Neither are there the spheres of boundless space, boundless consciousness, the sphere of nothingness, or the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception; neither this world nor the next world is able to arise there, nor is there sun or moon. In this, O monks, there is neither a coming or a going nor a standing still. Without bases is it, without support, without any mental function whatever. This is the end of Dukkha, this is Nibbana.

“Hard is it to perceive the Deathless realm,  
Not easy is it to perceive the Truth.  
Yet penetrated by the Master is craving,  
To nothing more the Seer is attached.<sup>vi</sup>

There are, however, two aspects to this Nibbana. One is called Nibbana with the aggregates remaining (*sa-upadisesa*) which is experienced while still alive. The second is called Nibbana without the aggregates remaining (*anupadisesa*) and refers to the state after the death of the physical body. This will be clarified in the next section.

## **THE TEN FETTERS AND THE FOUR STAGES OF MENTAL PURIFICATION**

The Buddha described ten fetters, or mental defilements, which are responsible for keeping the kamma-energized mind in its self-perpetuating and strengthening process. These ten fetters, or obstructions, keep the mind tightly bound and attached to the objects of the world, including being attached to itself. With these, the kammic force is kept forever circling on

the wheel of birth and death, *samsara*, throughout the various realms of existence, trying to keep hold of itself.

1. *Sakkaya-ditthi*: This is the personality view, or the belief in independent self-existence. It is the belief in some type of entity or soul which is behind the process of sensory cognition, being the owner who enjoys or hates the experiences. Some hold that this soul is individual and eternal, that it goes on to an eternal life in heaven or hell. Others believe that the soul was originated with this life and is destroyed at death with nothing left whatsoever.
2. *Vicikiccha*: This is skeptical doubt and uncertainty as to the true nature of the body and mind and the world. It is doubt about the effectiveness of *Dhamma* practice, and doubt about the Buddha, whether he was truly fully Enlightened and whether what he taught was true or not.
3. *Silabbata-paramasa*: This is belief that certain external rites and rituals can be an effective means of inner mental purification and spiritual salvation; belief that someone else (a savior) or bathing in Holy water, etc., can cleanse or wash sins away and release one from past negative, unwholesome kamma.
4. *Kama-raga*: This is sensuous lust, or desire, and attachment to the sense objects which stimulate the mind into action. It is the strong attraction and desire for pleasant and beautiful things.
5. *Patigha*: This is repugnance, resentment, anger, ill will, and hate. It is the tendencies in the mind which react this way towards certain sense stimuli when contacted.

*These first five are the lower fetters, which are the main obstacles in binding the mind to this world. They prevent one from attaining higher realizations. The following five are called the higher fetters. They are more subtle in their manifestation and they are the last ones to be eliminated before full Liberation, or Enlightenment, is attained.*

6. *Rupa-raga*: This is greed, desire, or attachment to the idea of rebirth in one of the fine-material realms (*rupa-loka*) where beings have bodies of transparent, rainbow-colored or radiating light. These are heavenly

realms where the lifespan is incredibly long and blissful. It is a hindrance, however, to spiritual advancement to be attached to these, as *Dhamma* cannot be practiced in these realms.

7. *Arupa-raga*: This is desire to be reborn in the immaterial or formless realms where exist only very lofty, expansive, formless states of mind. The lifespan here is even longer than in the realms of form. But they are also impermanent states, created by certain concentration techniques. There is no possibility of practicing *Dhamma* in these states, therefore they are not considered desirable by the wise.
8. *Mana*: This is conceit and pride which, together with ignorance, is the most deeply rooted of all the ten fetters.
9. *Uddhacca*: This is mental excitation and restlessness which never allows the mind to rest or become completely still. It can come from having remorse and uneasiness about having done things which should not have been done, and for not having done things which you know should have been done.
10. *Avijja*: This is ignorance, delusion, the biggest obstacle of all. It is ignorance of the Four Noble Truths: ignorance of suffering, its cause, its cessation, and the path leading to its cessation.

It is these ten fetters which must be consciously worked on, undermined, and rooted out through meditation and the acquiring of wisdom. Wisdom is the sword which cuts off these defilements. They cannot be eradicated by mere wishful thinking. They are cut off only through continuous meditative awareness applied in the course of one's daily life, whether as a monk in seclusion or a layman in the workaday world. It is just that which constitutes one's *Dhamma* practice. The fetters can be undermined and rooted out quickly or slowly, depending on the strength of one's attachments, ignorance, and accumulated kamma. Even the first experience of Nibbana will never be realized until there has been considerable progress towards weakening and eradicating them.

The Buddha has described four progressive stages in the eradication of these ten fetters. The earnest disciple must advance through all of the stages

in order to attain the final Nibbana and avoid being reborn into any samsaric realm.

In diligent meditation one must reflect on the impermanence and soullessness of the five aggregates of clinging. One must develop a dispassionate and detached attitude toward them. When the seven factors of Enlightenment<sup>viii</sup> are developed there will come the first complete cutting off of the conditioned mind, leaving only the Unconditioned, Unborn, the direct experience of Nibbana. That will probably last for only an instant, but, nevertheless, the realization is such that it destroys the first three fetters. That state of mental purification is called *sotapatti*, or stream-entry. It literally means “entering the stream,” the stream of the wisdom-mind which flows and ends in the final Nibbana, or Liberation. The three fetters that are destroyed will no longer be a binding hindrance in one’s *Dhamma* practice. The mind at that point, will be assured that it is destined to attain the complete destruction of the remaining seven fetters and attain Enlightenment in a matter of time. That is said to require, at the most, seven more rebirths. However, it could occur before the end of the present life if sustained effort were maintained.

The first realization is also the most difficult to attain. It requires an tremendous initial effort to burst through the delusion of “self” or “I” consciousness, and that opposes the momentum of normal thinking. The Buddha highly praised the attainment of Stream-entry in the following suttas.

The Blessed One took up a little pinch of dust onto the tip of his thumbnail and said to the group of monks: “What do you think, monks, is this little pinch of dust that I have taken up on my thumbnail the greater, or the mighty earth?”

“The mighty earth, Lord, is the greater. Infinitely small is the pinch of dust taken up by the Blessed One onto his thumbnail. Not by a hundredth part, nor a thousandth part, not by a hundred thousandth part does it equal the mighty earth when set beside it.”

“Even so, monks, for the Ariyan disciple who has won to vision [direct experience of Nibbana], for the one who has understanding, this is the greater ill — that which for him is wholly perished; little is the ill that remains, not worth a hundredth part, not worth a thousandth part, not worth a hundred thousandth part when measured with the former ill which for him now is finished. So great in good, monks, is it to be wise in the Dhamma; so great it is to have gained the eye of *Dhamma*.”<sup>viii</sup>

Because of the extreme level of purity of the kammic force at this stage, it is impossible for it to re-manifest in any one of the lower realms of suffering. It is also impossible for that individual to commit one of the evil deeds which would result in such a rebirth.

Monks, the Noble disciple who, by destroying the three fetters and blessed with four qualities, is a Stream-Winner, who has passed utterly beyond all fear of a woeful rebirth, not doomed to the downfall; he is assured and bound for full Enlightenment. What are the four qualities he is possessed with?

He is blessed with unwavering faith and confidence in the Buddha, thinking: “It is so, he is the Awakened One, the Arahant, the teacher of gods and men, the unsurpassable tamer of men, a knower of the different worlds (of samsaric existence), a Buddha, the Blessed One.”

He is blessed with unwavering faith and confidence in the *Dhamma*, thinking: “Well expounded, well proclaimed by the Blessed One is the *Dhamma*, to be experienced by the wise, inviting one to come and see, immediately realizable, worthy to achieve.”

He is blessed with unwavering faith and confidence in the Sangha (those who have won to vision) thinking: “Well attained, of good conduct, of deep insight, wise and dutiful are the disciples of the Blessed One, worthy of reverence, worthy of gifts and hospitality, worthy of honor, a field of merit for the world.”

He is blessed and equipped with the clean, bright, unsoiled virtues which are praised and dear to the Noble Ones, virtues unbroken . . . that lead to concentration of mind and mental composure.

These are the four qualities with which the Ariyan disciple is a Stream-Winner.<sup>ix</sup>

Monks, there may be a change in the four great primary elements — earth, water, fire, and air — but there can be no change [rebirth in the lower realms] for the Ariyan disciple blessed with unwavering faith and unblemished virtues which are dear to the Ariyan.

So, monks, those with whom you have sympathy, those who you think should listen, whether friends or intimates, or kinsmen or blood-relation — all such persons should be advised, instructed, grounded, and established in these four factors of Stream-Winning.<sup>x</sup>

The Buddha speaks to a lay disciple who is already a Stream-Enterer.

“For he whose mind, Mahanama, has for a long time been practiced in faith, in virtue, in learning, in giving up sensual craving and attachment, and in insight — though this material body of his, compounded of the four primary elements, sprung from parents, of a nature to be worn away, pounded away, broken and scattered; though his body may be devoured by dogs, jackals, vultures, and crows, a home for worms — yet his mind, if long practiced in faith, virtue, learning, giving up, and insight, the mind soars aloft [not bound to earthly sense pleasures], the mind wins the summit [attains Nibbana].

“Suppose, Mahanama, a man plunges a jar of butter or oil into a deep pool of water and breaks it; it becomes bits and fragments and sinks down to the bottom; but the butter or oil that was in the jar floats up and reaches the surface.

“Just so, Mahanama, if the mind has long time been practiced and established in faith . . . insight, though this material body will perish in any number of ways, yet the mind soars aloft, wins the summit.

“Now your mind, Mahanama, has long been practiced and well established in faith . . . insight. Have no fear, Mahanama! Blameless will be your death. you will make an end that is blameless [not reborn in the lower realms]. For the Ariyan disciple who is blessed with these things,



his mind bends to Nibbana, slopes and tends to and gravitates to, ends in Nibbana [in a very short while].

“Just as if a tree, Mahanama, bends to the east, slopes, tends, and leans to the east, which way will it fall when its roots are cut?”

“It will fall in the direction to which it is leaning, Lord.”

“Just so, Mahanama, the Noble disciple who is well established in faith, virtue, learning, giving up, and insight . . . his mind bends, slopes, tends, gravitates, and ends in Nibbana.”<sup>xi</sup>



After one has entered the stream, the next task is to continue working on undermining and destroying the remaining seven fetters. That is done by continued meditation as before and purifying the mind of sense desire, attachment, ill will, and aversion. When these have been reduced significantly, the second stage of mental purity is reached. That is called the “Once-Returning” state (*Sakadagami*) because that person, the Once-Returner, has, at the very least, only one more rebirth remaining in the human realm before attaining final Nibbana.

When one has succeeded in completely annihilating all traces of sensual desire and aversion, one attains the third stage of mental purity called “Never-Returning” (*Anagami*). Upon death the mind will manifest in a pure abode, one of the heavenly realms, and from there will attain the final Nibbana. Therefore it is called “Never-Returning,” never to return to this world.

If a persevering wise one succeeds in destroying the remaining five fetters even in this life, he experiences the full liberation of mind. This is called “*Arahatship*.” An *Arahat*, a perfect saint, abides in the full attainment of Nibbana. In this last stage the kammic force, which had been circling the rounds of birth and death since beginning-less time, is totally depleted. All substrata of desire, attachment, aversion, and ‘I’ conceit have been destroyed without remainder. The Holy Life has been lived, done is what was to be done, there is nothing more in the way of mental purification left to do. Ended is the cycle of becoming, laid down is the burden. The *Arahat*

is one with the *Dhamma*. The body will continue to live until its natural lifespan is reached and the mind will continue to function, but in a completely selfless, detached, and composed manner. The mind of an Arahant no longer produces any kind of kamma, good or bad, which would be grounds for becoming or rebirth. That person would most likely just continue to live where he happened to be or travel around and teach, instruct, and gladden people in the Dhamma and meditation, whenever and wherever asked. He or she would be an inspiration for others and generate loving kindness and compassion to all sentient beings. That is a true saint. That is Supreme Nibbana. That is the end of suffering.

In this process of mental purification the main idea is to eradicate by Wisdom the feeling of ‘I’ or separation. Along with this the rest of the defilements will gradually fall away. When one attains Stream-entry the illusive notion of ‘I’ has been fully penetrated and understood. The person in his mind sees and knows that in ultimate truth there is no individual separate ‘self’ in or about the body or mind. Nevertheless, relatively there still remains a subtle remnant of ‘I’ persisting in his consciousness. This is like the smell of a flower, which neither belongs to the petals alone, nor to the stem, nor to the colors alone, but which is just the smell of the total flower.

With progress along the final stages of the Path, the subtle tendency to think “I am,” which is exhibited in times of sudden surprise or fear, is gradually eradicated. This process of ‘I’ purification is given in the following simile by the Awakened One.

Suppose monks, there is a dirty, soiled cloth and the owner gives it to a washer man and he rubs it smooth with salt-earth, or lye, or cow dung, and rinses it in pure clean water. Now, though that cloth be utterly cleansed, yet there remains about it, still lingering, the smell of salt-earth, lye or cow dung. The washer man returns it to the owner, and he lays it up in a sweet-scented box for a time. Thus that smell that hung about and was not removed is now utterly removed.

Even so, though an Ariyan disciple has put away the five lower fetters, yet there remains in him a subtle remnant from among the five grasping groups, a subtle aroma of “I-consciousness,” of the lurking tendency to think “I am,” still not removed from his consciousness.

Later on he continues to live contemplating the rise and fall, the impermanence and soulless-ness of the five aggregates of grasping, seeing clearly the arising and ceasing of them. In this way, after no long time, that subtle remnant of ‘I,’ that lurking tendency to think “I am,” which was still not removed from him — now that is removed (and he has attained to Arahathship).<sup>xii</sup>

Even those who have realized the first, or second, or third stage and have direct knowledge of Nibbana do not abide in the full, complete release and the happiness of having destroyed all the defilements, as does the Arahath. That is described in this sutta.

The venerable Musila, the venerable Savittha, the venerable Narada, and the venerable Ananda were once dwelling together in a certain park. Now the venerable Savittha said this to the venerable Musila: “Apart, friend Musila, from belief, apart from hearsay, apart from your own inclination, apart from argument as to method, apart from reflection on, and approval of, an opinion, has the venerable Musila as his very own the knowledge that decay and death is conditioned by birth, that birth is conditioned by becoming, becoming by grasping . . . mental formations by ignorance; that from the ceasing of ignorance is the ceasing of the mental formations and from the ceasing of birth ceases all old age, sickness, sorrow, suffering, decay, and death?”

“Apart, friend Savittha, from belief, from inclination (and the rest) I know each of these, I see each of these [the twelve links of interdependent arising].”

“Apart, friend Musila, from belief, apart from inclination and the rest has the venerable Musila as his very own the knowledge that the ceasing of becoming is Nibbana?”

“Apart, friend Savittha, from belief and the rest, this I know, this I see: the ceasing of becoming is Nibbana.”

“Well then, the venerable Musila must be an Arahant in whom the intoxicants are wholly perished.”



When this was said the venerable Musila became silent. [It is forbidden for a monk to directly admit to having attained Enlightenment or any psychic powers, and Musila was an Arahant.]

Then the venerable Narada spoke to the venerable Savittha: “It were well, friend Savittha, if you were to ask me those questions. I will give answers to you thereon.”

“Take, friend Narada, these questions. I ask them of the venerable Narada. Let the venerable Narada give answers to these questions. [And they were asked in the same words, and in the same words were answered.]

“Well then, the venerable Narada is an Arahant in whom the intoxicants are wholly perished.”

“‘The ceasing of becoming is Nibbana.’ I have well seen this, friend Savittha, by right insight as it really is, and yet I am not an Arahant in whom the intoxicants are wholly perished.

“It is just as if, friend Savittha, there were in the jungle-path a deep well with water in the bottom, but neither was there a rope nor a bucket with which to draw it out. And a man should come by fordome with heat, weary, trembling, athirst. He should look down into the well and verily in him would be the knowledge: ‘Water!’ Yet he would not be in a position to touch it.

“Even so, friend, I have well seen by right insight as it really is that the ceasing of becoming is Nibbana, and yet I am not an Arahant for whom the defilements are wholly perished.

When this was said, the venerable Ananda spoke this to the venerable Savittha: “Holding the view you do, friend Savittha, what do you say about the venerable Narada?”

“Holding the view I do, friend Ananda, I say nothing that is not lovely and good about the venerable Narada.”<sup>xiii</sup>

The Buddha has given the following story to describe the five types of disciples who are practicing these teachings for destroying the fetters, to cross the ocean of *samsara*.

Once upon a time, monks, a competent cowherd of Magadha [a country province in North India] in the last month of the rainy season, having considered the near bank of the river Ganges, having considered the further bank, drove his cattle across to the other side at a place where there was a ford. First he drove across the bulls who were the sires and leaders of the herd. When these had safely cut across the stream and went beyond, he drove across the sturdy bullocks and young steers. When these had safely cut across and went beyond, then he drove across the half-grown bull calves and heifers. When these too, had cut across and gone safely beyond, then he drove the weaker calves across. These too, crossed safely and went securely beyond. At that time there was a new born calf which, by following the lowing of its mother, also crossed the stream safely and stood securely on the other side.

What was the cause of their safe crossing? It was that the cowherd had considered the near bank of the river and had considered the far bank and then drove his cattle across to the other side at a place where there was a ford.

Even so, Buddhas who arise in the world from time to time are like the cowherd. They show the safe, sure way to cross the flood of craving, grasping, and becoming, to cross the great ocean of birth and death, to arrive at the further shore and stand on firm ground [Nibbana].

Monks, like unto those bulls who were the sires and leaders of the herd of cattle, who cut safely across the river and went beyond, so are those Noble Disciples of the Tathagatas who are perfected ones, having destroyed the cankers [ten fetters], who have lived the Holy Life, did what was to be done, laid down the burden, attained the goal, freed by perfect insight and profound knowledge. For these [Arahats] have cut across Mara's stream (delusion), they have gone safely beyond.

Like unto those sturdy bullocks and young steers, who cut safely across the river and securely beyond, are those Noble Disciples who, having destroyed the five lower fetters binding to this world, are spontaneously

reborn at death into a realm of pure existence and will attain final Nibbana there. They are not liable to return to this world or any other. For these Never-Returners also have cut across Mara's stream and will go safely beyond.

Like unto those half-grown bull calves and heifers . . . are those Noble Disciples who, having destroyed the three lower fetters and reduced desire and aversion, are Once-Returners who, having to come back to this world only once more, will put an end to suffering.

Like unto those weaker calves . . . are those Noble Disciples who, having destroyed the three lower fetters, are Stream-Winners, no longer liable to be reborn into states of woe. They are assured [within seven lifetimes] to attain final rest.

Like unto that new born calf . . . are those learning monks and lay disciples who are earnestly striving for Dhamma, who are striving to gain unshakable faith [Stream-entry]. These Dhamma-strivers also, with persistent diligent practice, will cut safely across Mara's flood [burst the first three fetters]; they will go safely beyond.

By the Self-Awakened One, who fully comprehends, thoroughly knowing every world [how beings are reborn in the various realms due to their kamma], now is opened the door to the deathless [the Noble Eightfold Path] for reaching utter security — *Nibbana*. Showed is the way to cut across the flood of Mara. Let there be abundant joy, monks, let security be reached.<sup>xiv</sup>

## **NIRVANA**

“Should to one thus liberated in mind even extraordinarily sublime and mighty visible forms come into his field of vision, sounds into his field of hearing, odors into his range of smelling, flavors into his range of tasting, touch objects into his field of feeling, and mind objects into the field of the mind, all of these things can no longer overwhelm him. His mind remains untouched, steadfast, unshakable, beholding the impermanence and emptiness of everything.

Whoso has turned to renunciation

Turned to detachment of the mind,  
Is filled with all-embracing love,  
And freed from thirsting after life,  
To unobstructed sight of mind,  
Knowing the sense origin;  
His mind, indeed is fully freed,  
Who has found the stillness of his heart,  
He heaps up no more the deeds he did,  
And naught remains for him to do.

Just as a big and solid rock  
Cannot be shaken by the wind,  
So cannot visual forms, or sound,  
Or lovely or ugly things,  
Shake any more the Holy One.  
Firm is his mind, his mind is freed.  
He sees how all things arise just to pass away.<sup>xv</sup>

In whom there is meditation and wisdom,  
He is near Nibbana.  
Those in deep meditation, always aware  
On the six bases of contact,  
Constantly aware and concentrated,  
His own Nibbana he will come to know.<sup>xvi</sup>

## **TWO ASPECTS OF NIBBANA**

There are, O Monks, two aspects of Nibbana: The Nibbana aspect with the five aggregates of existence still remaining, and the Nibbana aspect with no more aggregates remaining.

What is the Nibbana aspect with the five aggregates of existence remaining? There the Noble Disciple is a Holy One, the biases have faded away in him. He has fulfilled the Holy Life, accomplished the task, thrown down the burden, attained the goal, cast off the fetters that

bind, and is liberated through right insight. But there still remain with him [until the death of his body] the five sense organs through which he still experiences the various sense stimuli. Hence, what in such a Noble One is the extinction of greed, hate, and delusion, this is called the Nibbana aspect with the five aggregates of existence still remaining.

What, now, is the Nibbana aspect with no more groups remaining? There the Noble Disciple is a Holy One . . . as before . . . and is liberated through right wisdom. And all those feelings which are no more desired, will [at the death of the body] come to extinction. This is called the Nibbana aspect with no more groups of existence remaining.<sup>xvii</sup>

The Nibbana aspect with the five aggregates remaining refers to the Arahant while he is still alive. The Nibbana aspect without the five aggregates remaining refers to the state after the body of the Arahant dies, when the aggregates of being are completely dispersed, never to come together again.

The following sutta by the Buddha describes the final death of an Arahant.

When the Tathagata speaks of a disciple who has put an end to all fetters which bind, who has destroyed all craving and attachment, when such a Noble One passes away at the breakup of the five groups of existence, he does not speak of that one in terms of rebirth saying: “So and so is reborn in such and such a state thus.” But he describes that disciple as “One who has cut off craving, he has broken the bond, by perfect comprehension of conceit [the ego] he has put an end to ill.”

Now what does the Tathagata mean by that? As to rebirth, I declare it to be for what has fuel, not for what is without fuel: Just as a fire with fuel blazes up and burns, but does not blaze up and burn without fuel. Even so, I declare rebirth to be for what has fuel, not for what is without fuel.

And what is fuel? At the time when a being lays aside the carcass and rises up again in another body, in another existence, for that I declare craving and attachment to be the fuel. Indeed craving and attachment are on that occasion the fuel.<sup>xviii</sup>



Just as, conditioned through oil and wick, the lamp burns, but after the oil and wick are consumed, and by lack of further fuel, the light comes to extinction. Even so is consciousness of name-and-form conditioned by ignorance, craving and attachment, and when this fuel is utterly abandoned and cut down at the root, so too, is consciousness of name-and-form cut down at the root, destroyed, no longer able to arise and find a footing in another existence.

Just as the bourn [destination or resting place] of a  
blazing spark,  
Struck from an anvil, gradually fading, cannot be  
pointed to or known,  
So too, in the case of those who've rightly won  
release,  
And crossed the flood of lusts that bind,  
And reached the bliss unshaken,  
The bourn they've won cannot be pointed out or  
known.<sup>xix</sup>

A certain monk approached the Buddha and asked him what happens to the Tathagata after death. The Buddha answered him thus:

“Now what do you say, friend, do you regard the Tathagata’s body as being the Tathagata?”

“Surely not, Lord.”

“Then do you regard the Tathagata as his feelings, or perceptions, or his mental formations, or his consciousness?”

“Surely not, Lord.”

“Then do you regard the Tathagata as being apart from these?”

“Surely not, Lord.”

“Do you then, friend, regard the Tathagata as having no body, no feelings, no perceptions, no mental formations and no consciousness ?

“Surely not, Lord.”

“Then since in just this life, friend, a Tathagata is not found in Truth, in reality, it is not proper to speak of him thus: ‘The Tathagata exists

after death, he does not exist after death; or he both exists and does not exist after death; or he neither exists nor does not exist after death.’ It is just sorrow [the five aggregates of clinging] and the ceasing of sorrow that I teach.”<sup>xx</sup>

At one time Rohitissa, son of the gods, spoke thus to the Blessed One: “Where, Lord, does one not get born, nor grow old, nor die, nor pass away, nor get reborn? Is one able, Lord, by walking to come to know or experience that end of the world, or to see it, or to get there?”

“Where, friend, one does not get born, nor grow old, nor die, nor get reborn, that end of the world, I say, you are not able, by walking, to come to know or experience, or to arrive at. But neither do I say, friend, that without having reached the end of the world [in the mind] could there be an ending of suffering. It is, friend, in this very fathom-long physical frame with its feelings, perceptions, and consciousness that I declare lies the world, the arising of the world, the cessation of the world and the path leading to the cessation of the world.”

Never may the world’s end be reached by walking,  
But no release is there from ill, till that end is reached,  
Therefore that wise one, the knower of the worlds,  
Is the one who has reached the end of the world [of suffering].  
Consummate in him is the Holy life;  
Knowing the world’s end, that sage, serene,  
Yearns not for this world or any other.<sup>xxi</sup>

A certain deva, when the night was far spent, came into the presence of the Blessed One, saluted him, and stood at one side. So standing that deva spoke thus to the Blessed One: “Do you, dear Sir, know, for them that live, detachment and freedom and deliverance?”

I do know, O friend, for them that live, detachment, freedom, and deliverance.”

“In what manner and how, dear Sir, do you know for them that live, detachment, freedom and deliverance?”

When delight and existence are exhausted,  
When perception and consciousness are both extinguished,

When feelings cease and are appeased — thus, O friend,  
Do I know for them that live, detachment, freedom, deliverance.<sup>xxii</sup>

## **MORE QUESTIONS OF KING MILINDA**

“Nagasena, is a man who will not be reborn aware of the fact?”

“Yes, O King.”

“And how does he know it?”

“By the cessation of all that is cause, proximate and remote, of giving rebirth [ego, craving, kamma production, etc.]”

“Give an illustration, Sir.”

“Suppose, O King, a farmer had plowed and sown a crop and filled his granary; and then for a period should neither plough nor sow, but he would live on the stored-up grain, or he disposed of it in trade or dealt with it as he had need. Would the farmer be aware that his granary was not getting filled?”

“Yes, he ought to know it. He would know that the cause, proximate or remote, of the filling of the granary had ceased.”

“Just so, O King, with the man you spoke of; by the cessation of all that is cause, proximate or remote, for giving rebirth, he would know or be aware of having exhausted his liability to rebirth.”

“Well explained, Nagasena.”<sup>xxiii</sup>

“Nagasena, is there anyone who, after the death of his body, is not re-individualized?”

“Some are so reborn and some are not, O King. A sinful being is reborn; a sinless, pure one is not.”

“Nagasena, will you be re-individualized?”

“If when I die, O King, I die with craving and attachment in my heart, yes; but if not, no.”

“Very good, Sir. But, Nagasena, he who terminates his re-individualization, is it by reasoning that he does so?”

“Both by reasoning and by wisdom, Your Majesty, and by other good qualities.”

“But are not reasoning and wisdom surely much the same?”

“Certainly not, O King. Reasoning is one thing, wisdom is quite another. Sheep, goats, oxen, buffaloes, camels and asses have reasoning, but wisdom they have not.”

“Well put, Reverend Sir. But what is the characteristic mark of reasoning, and what of wisdom?”

“Reasoning, O King, always has comprehension as its mark; but wisdom has the characteristic of cutting off.”

“But, Sir, how is comprehension the characteristic of reasoning, and cutting off that of wisdom? Give me an illustration.”

“O King, do you remember the barley reapers?”

“Yes, certainly, Sir.”

“How then, O King, do they reap barley?”

“With the left hand they grasp barley into a bunch, and taking the sickle into the right hand, they cut it off with that.”

“Just even so, O King, does the wise disciple, by this reasoning, grasp the defilements of his mind, and by his penetrating wisdom, cut them off. In this way is it that comprehension is the characteristic mark of reasoning, but cutting off is that of wisdom.”

“Well put, Venerable Nagasena!”<sup>xxiv</sup>

The following are some more questions of King Milinda to the Arahant Nagasena concerning Nibbana.

“Nagasena, your people say Nibbana is not past, nor future, nor present, nor produced, nor not produced, nor producible. In that case how does one who, having aligned his life aright, realize Nibbana?”

“O King, that principle of Nibbana, so peaceful, so blissful, so delicate, does exist. It is he who orders his life aright, meditating on the idea of all things according to the teachings of the Conquerors [the Buddhas]. He realizes by wisdom, even as a pupil, by his knowledge makes himself, according to the instructions of his teacher, the master of an art [the art of destroying the ten fetters].”

“Nibbana is known by freedom from distress, by confidence, by peace, calm, and bliss, by happiness, purity of mind, and freshness.”

“Just as, O King, a man being burnt in a blazing, fiery furnace heaped up with many bundles of dry sticks, when he has freed himself from it by a mighty effort and escaped into a cool place, he would experience supreme bliss.”

“Just so, whoever orders his life aright, he by his careful thinking (meditation and reflection) will realize the supreme bliss of Nibbana, in which the burning heat of the threefold fire [lust (*lobha*), hate (*dosa*), and delusion (*moha*)] has all gone out.”

“As the furnace, O King, so should you regard this threefold fire; as the man fallen into the fire and the cool place out of the fire to which he escapes, as Nibbana. Or again, as a man fallen on a spot filthy with dirt, slime, and mud, with a mighty effort has gotten free from it, resting in a clean, spotless place.”

“Just so, whoever orders his life aright, he by his careful thinking will realize the supreme bliss of Nibbana from which the stains of evil dispositions have been removed. As the mud, O King, should you regard attachment to wealth, honor, gains, fame, and flattery.”

“But Nagasena, Sir, how does he who orders his life aright realize Nibbana?”

“O King, he who orders his life aright grasps the truth as to the origin and development of all things, and when he is doing so, he perceived disease, old age, decay, and death, but he perceives not therein, whether in the beginning, in the middle, or the end, anything worthy of being laid of (to call ‘me,’ ‘mine,’ or my ‘self’).”

“As a man, if a thick iron rod had been heated the whole day and were all glowing and scorching red hot, would find no spot on it whether at the ends or in the middle fit to be taken hold of; just so, O King, a noble discernor of the truth perceives not anything in the conditioned world fit to be relied upon as lasting satisfaction or source of happiness. Thus discontentment arises in his mind and a fever takes hold of his body, he becomes weary of repeated lives, and in the mind of him who thus perceives the insecurity of transient life the thought arises: ‘All on fire is this endless becoming, full of pain is it, full of despair; if only one could reach a stage in which there were no becoming, there would be calm.’”

Sweet is the riddance of all these defects, the absence of passion and ego, the end of craving, the peace, the cool, Nibbana.”

“While thus thinking, therewith does his mind leap forward into that state in which there is no becoming, and he finds peace, and he exults and rejoices at the thought: ‘A refuge have I found at last!’”

“He strives with might and main along that Path, searches it out, and accustoms himself thoroughly with it. To that end does he make firm his self-possession, to that end does he hold fast in effort, to that end does he remain steadfast in love and compassion [towards all beings in the world], and still to that does he direct his mind to the destruction of the defilements. Again and again he does so, until gone far beyond the transitory, he gains the real, the highest fruit [Arahatship]. When he has gained that, O King, the man who has ordered his life aright has realized Nibbana.”

“Nagasena, does there exist the spot — either in the direction east, or south, or north, or west, either above or below, or on the horizon — where Nibbana exists or is stored up?”

“No, O King, there is no spot like that where Nibbana is stored up. Nibbana just is, and he who orders his life aright will by careful thinking realize Nibbana, just as fire exists, and yet there is no place where fire is stored up or exists. But if a man rubs two sticks together the fire comes. Just so, O King, Nibbana exists, though there is no spot where it is stored up.”

“Venerable Nagasena, let it be granted that there is no place where Nibbana exists or is stored up. But is there any place on which a man may stand and, ordering his life aright, realize Nibbana?”

“Yes, O King, there is such a place, and that is virtue [moral conduct]. For if grounded in virtue, and in careful attention, whether in the land of the Scythians or the Greeks, whether in China or Benaras, or Kashmir, or on a mountaintop, or in a cave, or in the highest heavens — wherever he may be — the man who orders his life aright will realize Nibbana.”

“Venerable Nagasena, this Nibbana you speak about, can it be made clear by metaphor, or explanation, its form, or figure, or duration, or size?”

“Nibbana, O King, has nothing similar to it. By no reason, metaphor, or explanation can its size, form, duration, or measure be made clear. Suppose, O King, someone were to ask you: ‘How much water is there in the sea, and how many creatures are there that dwell therein?’ Could you, O King, give a reply?”

“Certainly not, Sir. It would be impossible to ever calculate that. It’s beyond one’s power, the ocean is so vast.”

“Just so, O King, it is impossible to tell the form, size, duration, and measure of Nibbana, although it is a condition that exists. And even if one of magical powers were able to count the volume of water and the creatures in the vast ocean, even he could not tell the form, size, duration, or measure of Nibbana.

“Again, O King, you have heard of beings and gods that are invisible or have no outward form, but can you make clear by metaphor or reason or explanation, the form, size, figure, or duration of these beings?”

“No I cannot, yet they do exist, but it is impossible in any of those ways to explain it, make it clear, their size, etc.”

“As impossible as it is, O King, to tell the form or figure of size of the invisible, formless gods, though they after all are beings that exist; so to, is it impossible in any of the ways mentioned to explain, or make it clear, the form, size, duration, or measure of Nibbana, though it is a condition that exists. Although this cannot be explained, reasoned, or made clear by way of simile or metaphor, there are certain qualities of Nibbana which can be so made clear.”

“O Nagasena. Sir, set my heart at ease and please tell me those qualities of Nibbana so that I may ease my mind!”

## QUALITIES OF NIBBANA



“O King, there is one quality of the lotus which is inherent in Nibbana: As the lotus flower is untarnished by the water, so is Nibbana by any evil dispositions untarnished.”

“There are two qualities of water which are inherent in Nibbana: ① As water is cool and assuages heat, so also is Nibbana cool and assuages the

fever arising from evil dispositions. ② Secondly, as water allays the thirst of men and beasts when they are exhausted anxious for a drink and tormented by thirst, so too does Nibbana allay the thirst of craving after lusts [the six sense objects], the craving after future life, and the craving after worldly prosperity. This is the second quality of water inherent in Nibbana.”

“These three qualities of medicine, O King, are inherent in Nibbana: ① As medicine is the refuge of beings tormented by disease, so is Nibbana the refuge of beings tormented with the poison of evil dispositions; ② it puts an end to grief and sorrow. ③ And again, as medicine is an ambrosia, so also is Nibbana.”

“There are four qualities of the ocean inherent in Nibbana: ① As the ocean does not tolerate dead corpses, but tosses them up on the shore, so does Nibbana not tolerate any evil dispositions. ② As the ocean, mighty and boundless, fills not with all the rivers that flow into it, so also is Nibbana mighty and boundless and fills not up with all the beings who attain or realize it in themselves. ③ As the ocean is the abode of great creatures, so is Nibbana the abode of great men [Arahats]. ④ As the ocean is full of many precious jewels and gems, so is Nibbana full of the gems of pure knowledge and emancipation.”

“There are five qualities of a mountain peak inherent in Nibbana: ① As a mountain is very lofty, so is Nibbana so very exalted [beyond description]; ② it is immovable; ③ it is inaccessible to all evil inclinations; ④ it is a place or state where nothing (sankharas, bad habits, kamma production) can grow; and ⑤ it is free from any emotions, desires, resentments, etc.”

“There are three qualities of red sandalwood inherent in Nibbana: ① It is hard to obtain; ② it is unequalled in its fragrance [supreme bliss]; and ③ it is praised by all the wise men.”

“There are three qualities of the wish-fulfilling gem inherent in Nibbana: ① it satisfies every desire; ② it causes delight and happiness; and ③ it is full of luster.”

“There are ten qualities of space inherent in Nibbana: Nibbana is ① not born, ② nor grows old, ③ nor dies, nor passes away; ④ it has no rebirth; ⑤ it is unconquerable; ⑥ thieves carry it not away; ⑦ it is not



attached to anything; ⑧ it is the sphere in which Arahats move; ⑨ nothing can obstruct it; and ⑩ it is infinite.”<sup>xxv</sup>

Happy his solitude who glad at heart,  
Hath learnt the Norm (Dhamma) and doth the vision see;  
Happy is that benignity toward the world,  
Which on no creature worketh harm.  
Happy the freedom from all lust and attachment,  
The ascent past and beyond the needs of sense-desires.  
He who doth crush the great “I am” conceit,  
This, even this is happiness supreme;  
The happiness, by happiness is won,  
Unending happiness is this alone.  
The threefold Wisdom hath he made his own,  
This, even this is Happiness Supreme.<sup>xxvi</sup>

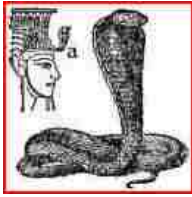


## UDANA II.1

(TRANSLATED FROM THE PALI BY DAWSONNE MELANCHTHON STRONG)

*Thus have I heard. On a certain occasion, subsequent to his attainment of Buddhahood, the Blessed One dwelt at Uruvela, on the banks of the stream Neranjara at the foot of the Mucilinda tree.*

*At that time, the Blessed One, having sat in an attitude of meditation for seven days, experienced the bliss of Emancipation.*



*Now it came pass that a great cloud appeared, out of season, and for seven days rain fell, cold winds blew and darkness prevailed. And the Serpent King, Mucilinda, came forth from his hidden realm and winding his coils seven times around the body of the Blessed One, he formed with his serpent's hood a great canopy above the head of the Buddha, and he uttered these words to himself, "may no coldness touch the Blessed One, nor any heat, may no gadflies or gnats, or winds, or sun-heat distress the Blessed One."*

*And the Blessed One, at the close of the seventh day arose from that state of trance and Mucilinda, the Serpent King, seeing that the sky was clear and cloudless, loosed his coils from around the body of the Blessed One and concealing his own nature, took upon him the form of a youth and stood before the Blessed One with folded hands, worshipping him. And the Blessed One, in this connection, on that occasion, breathed forth this solemn utterance:*

*"How sweet the solitude of the peaceful, of him who has heard and perceived the Truth!*

*Happy to be without malice! Restraintful towards all beings!*

*Happy are the passion-free! Happy he who overcomes Desire!*

*To have removed the notion 'I am', that is the supreme joy!"*

## CHAPTER V

# THE FOURTH NOBLE TRUTH

The fourth Noble Truth set forth in detail by the Compassionate One describes a way to live, think, and meditate which will enable a person to bring this whole five-fold mass of Dukkha to an end. It is accomplished by a gradual and interdependent practice of eight aspects of mainly mental training. It leads to a gradual slowing down, calming, and eventual ceasing altogether of one's deluded kammic-energy.

This way is called the Noble Eightfold Path. It is so called because it leads the practitioner to experience and abide in the permanent end of suffering, the noble realm of Nibbana, the state of everlasting peace and happiness, even in this life itself. It is an art of "Living Meditation" in all of one's activities of life. The following discourses by the Buddha and his disciple, Sariputta, explain set forth the Noble Eightfold Path.



"Nibbana, Nibbana!" is the saying, friend Sariputta. Pray, friend, what is this Nibbana?"

"The destruction and non-existence of lust, hatred, and delusion, friend, is called Nibbana"

"But is there any path, any approach to the realization or experience of Nibbana?"

"There is such a path, friend, there is such an approach. It is the Ariyan [Noble] Eightfold Path for the realization of Nibbana, to wit: right view, right thought, right speech, right action, right living, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration [mental composure]. Such, friend, is this path, this approach to the attainment of Nibbana, and a proper occasion for earnestness, too, friend."<sup>1</sup>

## THE DIVINE VEHICLE

Divine Vehicle, Ananda, is a term that may be applied to this very Ariyan Eightfold Path, unsurpassed for its conquest in the fight against the defilements of mind.

Right view, if cultivated and made much use of, ends in the restraint of lust and desire, the restraint of hatred, and eliminates all delusion and confusion. Right thought, right speech, right action, right living, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration, if cultivated and made much use of, ends in the destruction of lustful desire, hatred, and delusion.

By this, Ananda, are you to understand the words ‘Divine Vehicle,’ unsurpassed for its conquest in the fight for the liberation of the heart, Nibbana. These are terms that may be well applied to this very Ariyan Eightfold Path.

Whoso hath faith and wisdom, these two states  
For ever yoked together lead him on:  
Conscience the pole and mind the yoke thereof,  
And heedfulness his watchful charioteer.  
The vehicle is furnished forth with righteousness,  
Rapture is its axle; Energy its wheels,  
And tranquility the yokefellow of the balanced mind.  
Desire-less-ness the drapery;  
Goodwill and harmlessness are his weapons,  
Together with detachment of the mind,  
Endurance is his leathern coat of mail,  
And to attain the Peace this vehicle rolls on.  
‘Tis built by self, by one’s own self becometh;  
The ‘Divine Vehicle’, unconquerable in battle.  
Seated therein the Sages leave the world,  
And verily they win the victory, Nibbana.<sup>ii</sup>

## **THE MIDDLE WAY**

Monks, these two extremes ought not to be cultivated by one gone forth from the house-life to the monks' life. What are the two?

There is devotion to indulgence of pleasure in the objects of sensual desire, which is inferior, low, vulgar, ignoble, and leads to no good; and there is devotion to self-mortification, self-torment, which is painful, ignoble, and leads to no good.

The Middle Way discovered by a Perfect One [a Buddha] avoids both these extremes. It gives vision, it gives knowledge, and it leads to peace, to direct acquaintance, to discovery, to Nibbana. What is the Middle Way?

It is simply this Noble Eightfold Path, that is to say: right view, right thought, right speech, right action, right living, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration. That is the Middle Way discovered by an Awakened One, which gives vision, knowledge, and which leads to peace, to the realization, to the discovery, and to direct acquaintance of Nibbana.”<sup>iii</sup>

## **THE ANCIENT CITY SIMILE**

Monks, it is just as if a person wandering through the jungle, the great forest, should see an ancient path, an ancient road, traveled along by men of former times. And as if he should go along it, and going along it he should see an ancient town, an ancient royal city, inhabited by men of former times, having parks, groves, ponds, and walls — a delightful place. And then that person should inform the king or the king's chief minister, saying, “My Lord, you should know that when wandering through the jungle I saw an ancient path, an ancient road traveled along by men of former times . . . a delightful place. Sir, rebuild that city.” And then the king or his minister were to rebuild that city so that in time it became rich, prosperous, and well populated, expanded, and developed.

So also, monks, have I seen an ancient path, traveled along by the fully Enlightened Ones of former times, and going along this path I came to know old age, decay and death; I came to know the origin of old age; decay and death; I came to know the cessation of old age, decay and death; I came to know the way leading to the cessation of old age, decay and death. Going along it I came to know birth, the origin of birth, the cessation of birth, and the way leading to the cessation of birth. Going along it I came to know becoming. I came to know grasping . . . I came to know craving . . . I came to know feeling . . . I came to know contact . . . I came to know the six sense spheres . . . I came to know name-and-form . . . I came to know consciousness . . . I came to know the mental formations; I came to know the origin of mental formations; I came to know the cessation of mental formations; I came to know the way leading to the cessation of the mental formations.

And what is that ancient road, that ancient path, traveled along by the fully Enlightened Ones of former times? It is just this Ariyan Eightfold Path, that is to say: right view, right thought, right speech, right action, right living, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration.

Having understood it [through personal experience], I have taught it to the monks, the nuns, the male and female lay followers, so that this Holy Life has become rich, prosperous and wide spread, known to many, widely known and announced by gods and men.<sup>iv</sup>

Monks, if the wanderers holding other views should thus question you: “What is it, friends, for which the Holy Life is lived under the Teachings of the Buddha Gotama?” thus you should make answer to them: “With the aim of dispassion, destroying the fetters that bind, uprooting the habitual tendencies of mind, for thorough comprehension of the way out, realizing the fruits of knowledge, and for knowing and seeing. All of these are the aim of living the Holy Life under the Teachings of the Awakened One.

And if, monks, they should further ask you: “But friends, is there a way, is there a practice, which leads to dispassion for destroying the fetters . . . for realizing the fruit of knowledge?” you should thus answer them: “Friends, there is indeed a way, a practice which leads to the

accomplishment of all those things. It is just this very Ariyan Eightfold Path — that is to say: right view . . . right concentration.”<sup>v</sup>

## **CROSSING OVER**

These eight conditions, if cultivated and made much use of, conduce to that state in which no further shore and no hither shore exist. What are the eight? Right view, right thought, right speech, right action, right living, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration.

Few are they of mortal men who have reached the further shore. But the crowd of other folk on this side fare up and down. They who follow in the Teaching of the Norm expounded well, they shall reach the shore and pass the realm of Death so hard to cross.<sup>vi</sup>

## **THE POT**

Just as a pot without support is easily upset, and one with support is hard to upset, even so, the mind that is without support is easily upset; the mind which has support is hard to upset.

What is the support of the mind? It is just this Noble Eightfold Path, to wit: right view . . . right concentration.<sup>vii</sup>

Just as the river Ganges flows, slides, and tends to the ocean, even so, a person who cultivates and makes much use of this Ariyan Eightfold Path, his mind flows, slides, tends to the restraint of passion, to the Deathless, and to Nibbana.<sup>viii</sup>

Just as whatsoever species of seed and vegetation come to growth, to increase, to maturity, all of them depend on the earth, are supported by the earth; even so, one who, depending on virtue, supported by virtue, cultivates and makes much use of this Ariyan Eightfold Path, he attains to growth, to increase, to maturity, and he realizes for himself Nibbana.<sup>ix</sup>

Just as from time to time a strong wind scatters and causes to vanish a great mass of clouds that has arisen in the sky; even so, one who cultivates this Ariyan Eightfold Path, he scatters, and causes to vanish, all evil, unprofitable states of mind which arise from time to time.<sup>x</sup>

When ignorance leads the way, by the reaching of evil, unprofitable states, shamelessness and recklessness follow in its wake. In one who is swayed and obstructed by ignorance and is void of sense, then the wrong, unwholesome view gets scope. Unwholesome view gives rise to unwholesome thought, unwholesome speech, unwholesome action, unwholesome living, unwholesome effort, unwholesome mindfulness, and unwholesome concentration.

But when knowledge leads the way, by the attainment of wholesome profitable states the sense of shame and self-restraint follow. In one swayed by knowledge [of the Four Noble Truths] and of good sense, then wholesome view has scope. The right view gives scope to right thought, right speech . . . right concentration.<sup>xi</sup>



Just as in the case of a sea-faring vessel rigged with masts and stays . . . stranded on the bank for six months; it is worn by the water, while in dry season its rigging is spoiled by wind and sun; then, over-strung by a shower in the rainy season, it is easily weakened and rots away.

Just so, in one who cultivates the Ariyan Eightfold Path, the fetters, and evil, unprofitable states of mind are easily weakened and rot away.<sup>xii</sup>

It is for the full understanding, the abandoning of and the wearing out and cessation of these graspings, bodily ties, habitual tendencies, sense desires, hatred, hindrances, and so on, that this Noble Eightfold Path must be practiced, cultivated and made much use of for the right, complete destruction of suffering.<sup>xiii</sup>



## RIGHT VIEW

What is the right or wholesome view (*samma-ditthi*)? That consists of the proper understanding of the impermanent and soulless nature of all material and mental phenomena which make up the conditioned world. It is called right or wholesome because its view or way of seeing things according to reality leads to peace, happiness, and stability in one's life. In short, it is the proper understanding of the Four Noble Truths. The Buddha explains it in the following suttas.

“On two things, monks, does this world generally base its view — existence and non-existence. He who with right insight sees the arising of the world as it really is, he does not believe in the non-existence of the world. And he who with right insight sees the ceasing of the world as it really is, he does not believe in the existence [concretely] of the world.

Grasping after systems, imprisoned by dogmas, is this world, for the most part. He who does not go after, does not grasp at, does not take his stand on this system grasping, the dogmatic belief, this mental bias, such a one does not say: “It is my soul, I am this.” He who thinks: “That which arises is nothing but ill [conditioned phenomena]; that which ceases is nothing but ill; such a one has no doubts, no perplexity. In this matter, knowledge not borrowed from others [direct, intuitive knowledge] comes to him. All exists: that is one extreme. Nothing exists: that is the other extreme.

The Tathagata teaches a doctrine by the Middle Way, that is: Conditioned by ignorance arise the mental formations; conditioned by the mental formations, consciousness arises; conditioned by consciousness arises name-and-form . . . the six-fold sense spheres, contact, feeling, craving, grasping, becoming, rebirth, suffering, sorrow, sadness, old age, decay, and death. Thus is the arising of this whole mass of ill. But by the utter fading away and extinction of ignorance, by the arising of Wisdom, come the fading away and ceasing of the mental formations . . . consciousness . . . name-and-form, and so on. Thus is the ceasing of this entire mass of ill. This is the right view. Hearing this

Dhamma discourse, be ye firmly established in the Middle Way  
(*Majjhima-Patipada*).<sup>xiv</sup>

## BEARDED WHEAT

Suppose, monks, the spike of bearded wheat be wrongly grasped or wrongly aimed. When pressed by hand or foot, will it draw blood? It cannot be so. Why not? Because the spike is wrongly aimed

Just so, it cannot be that one whose view is wrongly aimed, whose way of life is wrongly directed, wrongly lived, can pierce through ignorance, draw knowledge and reach Liberation (Nibbana). Why not? Because his view is wrongly aimed.

But suppose that spike of bearded wheat were well aimed. When pressed by hand or foot it would certainly pierce the skin and draw blood. Why so? Because that spike is rightly aimed.

Just so, it is certain that one whose view is well directed, whose training and way of life is right practiced, he can pierce through ignorance, draw knowledge and reach Liberation. Why so? Because his view is well aimed.<sup>xv</sup>

## THREE SECTARIAN TENETS

There are, monks, three sectarian tenets which, if they are fully examined, investigated, and discussed, will end in a doctrine of inaction, even if adopted because of tradition. What are the three?

First, there are some ascetics and religious leaders who teach and hold this view that *whatever a person experiences, whatever deeds he does by body, speech or thought, all that is caused by past actions.*

Secondly, there are those who teach and hold the view that *whatever a person experiences . . . all that is caused by God's creation or will.*

Thirdly, there are those who teach and hold the view that *whatever a person experiences . . . is uncaused and unconditioned, happening by chance.*

☛ Now, monks, I asked those ascetics and religious leaders holding the first view: “Is it true that you venerable ones teach and hold the view that whatever a person experiences . . . all that is caused by past actions?” When they affirmed it, I said to them: “If that is so, venerable Sirs, then it is due to past action that people commit murder, theft and unchaste deeds; due to past actions that they indulge in lying, slanderous, harsh, and idle talk; due to past actions that they are covetous, malevolent, and hold false views.”

But those who have recourse to past actions as the decisive factor for determining their present actions [the fatalistic view] will lack the impulse and the effort for doing this or not doing that. Since for them, really and truly, no motive obtains that this or that ought to be done [being kind, courteous, truthful, and so on] or not to be done [killing, lying, stealing, sexual misconduct, intoxication, and so forth]. The term ‘ascetics’ does not rightly apply to those who live without mindfulness and self-control. This was my first justified rebuke to those who teach and hold such a view [that all which they do now, whether good or bad, is beyond their control, and all acts are predetermined. Thus there is no need to exert effort to be moral.]

☛ Then I asked those ascetics and religious leaders who believe that all one does and experiences . . . all that are caused by God’s creation or will: “Is it true?” When they affirmed it, I said to them: “If that is so, then it is due to God’s creation and will that people commit murder, theft, and unchaste deeds; due to God’s creation that they indulge in lying, slanderous, harsh, and idle talk; due to God’s will that they are covetous, malevolent, and hold false views.”

But those who have recourse to God’s creation and will as being the decisive factor for what they do now will also lack the impulse and the effort for doing this or not doing that. Since for them, really and truly, no motive obtains that this or that ought to be done or not to be done. The term ‘ascetic’ does not rightly apply to those who live without mindfulness and self-control. This was my second justified rebuke to those who teach and hold to the God’s creation view.

☛ Again, I asked those holding the third view: “Is it true that you venerable ones teach and hold the view that whatever a person does or

experiences, whether good, bad, or indifferent, all that is uncaused and unconditioned, happening solely by chance?” When they affirmed it, I said to them: “If that is so, then it is without cause, without condition, by mere chance that people commit murder, theft . . . are covetous, malevolent, and hold false views.”

But those who have recourse to an uncaused and unconditioned, by-chance nature of events as the decisive factor for what they do and experience will also lack the impulse and effort for doing this or not doing that, since for them, really and truly, no motive obtains that this or that should be done or should not be done. The term ‘ascetic’ does not rightly apply to those who live without mindfulness and self-control. This was my third justified rebuke to those who hold and teach such a view.

These are the three sectarian tenets which, if fully examined, investigated, and discussed will end in a doctrine of inaction, even if adopted because of tradition. These are unwholesome views.

Now, monks, this Dhamma taught by the Tathagata is un-refuted, untarnished, un-blamed, and uncensored by intelligent people. And what is that Dhamma?

There are these six elements: the elements of earth, water, fire, air, space, and consciousness.

There are these six fields of sense-object impression: the fields of eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind-objects.

There are these eighteen mental approaches: the pleasant, the painful, the neutral feeling which arises upon eye-contact, ear-contact, nose-contact, tongue-contact, body-contact and mind-contact, with their respective objects. These are the eighteen mental approaches to sensory experience.

There are these Four Noble Truths which is the Dhamma taught by the Tathagata, which is un-refuted, untarnished, un-blamed, and uncensored by intelligent people.

Based on the six elements [see above] there is descent into the womb [rebirth]. Such descent taking place, there comes to pass the development of name-and-form [a new body and mind]. Conditioned by

name-and-form, the six-fold sense sphere is complete, this gives rise to contact. From contact arises feeling.

Now, it is for him who feels [pleasure and pain, and who subsequently gets attached and craves, grasps, and becomes] that I make known the Four Noble Truths: This is suffering; this is the origin of suffering [craving]; this is the cessation of suffering [Nibbana]; this is the Path leading to the cessation of suffering [The Noble Eightfold Path].

These Four Noble Truths — they are the Dhamma taught by the Tathagata, which is un-refuted, untarnished, un-blamed, uncensored by intelligent people. This is the **right view**.<sup>xvi</sup>

## RIGHT THOUGHT

Once the right view has been acquired, the initial things to be undertaken in the “life of meditation” or “skillful living,” is to begin to redirect the haphazard patterns of manifesting one’s bodily actions, speech, and thought. Through the right view of life one understands that cruel, harsh, spiteful speech, thoughts, and actions are unwholesome, unskillful, and unprofitable because of their kammic consequences. So wholesome thinking is undertaken, to be consciously and skillfully developed and made to become automatic.



Wholesome thinking means to quit thinking along the lines of personal selfishness, what one can get or do for himself alone. It means to abandon thoughts of cruelty, anger, ill will, greed, envy, jealousy, covetousness, and sensuous, lustful thoughts. These thoughts, if thought about and subsequently acted upon and carried out in speech and action of body, would result in physical or mental harm either for oneself or others, or both.

Wholesome thought also means to deliberately and consciously cultivate thoughts of the directly opposite quality, to combat and replace those which are wicked and negative. That is to say, one must cultivate thoughts and genuine feelings of unselfishness, of kindness, of compassion towards all

living things, no matter what their status or station. One should cultivate thoughts of contentment, wanting little, giving up unnecessary desires and bad habits. Instead, one should reflect and think about inner calm, tranquility, and the happiness of non-worldly Nibbana. In general, wholesome or right thought means to cultivate and practice thoughts in accordance with the right view which was acquired.

## **RIGHT SPEECH**

To practice right, or wholesome, speech means to abandon all types of cruel, hard, abusive language directed towards others; to abandon tale-bearing and gossiping about others, telling what evil things they have done, out of spitefulness or revenge; to abandon empty, vain prattle, and the like. Practicing wholesome speech means to cultivate speaking kindly about others, bringing out their good qualities, not speaking about their shortcomings; to engage in kind, gentle, courteous and thoughtful, well-timed speech and pleasing words, to say what is true in accordance with fact when the proper time presents itself. Right speech also means to speak about things which conduce to contentment, dispassion, mental calm, and Nibbana, to speak in accordance with right view and right thought.

## **RIGHT ACTION**

The next aspect of the Noble Eightfold Path which must be undertaken at the outset is that of right, or wholesome action. That means abstaining from the immoral, unwholesome, negative kamma producing actions. In brief, right action means refraining from killing living beings, including animals of every kind. All sentient creatures abhor pain and seek happiness. We do not have the right to deprive them of this one common thing — life; it means that we should abstain from stealing, from taking others' property without their permission; it means that we must endeavor to refrain from employing lies and crafty, deceiving speech, and from saying things that injure others' feelings. Right action includes the obligation to desist from unlawful sexual relations and, finally, to abstain from taking intoxicating drinks and drugs

which cause carelessness and lead to the possibility of committing any other unwholesome acts.

These are the five basic moral restraints or self-protections which the Buddha has laid down to be observed by anyone who desires spiritual growth and calmness of mind. These precepts are observed based on understanding the law of cause and effect. Each action we perform will have a reaction. That is the basis of the Golden Rule, “*Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.*”

This means that what you do will rebound to you in some form. By practicing these alone, you will reduce much of the confusion, pain, and grief that follows one who habitually does the opposite. These five moral protections are not unique to Buddhism, but are found in practically every religious system which is concerned with spiritual growth.

## **RIGHT LIVELIHOOD**

The next factor of the Path, to be incorporated along with right action, is the practice of right livelihood. That means that one should not be engaged in any occupations or modes of earning one’s livelihood that are connected with any of the five unskillful actions mentioned above, as, for example: being involved in raising animals for slaughter; dealing in the manufacture or sale of arms; manufacturing or selling intoxicating liquor and drugs; being involved in establishments where gambling or illicit sex are performed. To acquire a means of blameless, wholesome livelihood, not involved in greedy, hateful, or selfish ambitions which are kammically unwholesome — that is right livelihood.

These five aspects of training in the Noble Eightfold Path are undertaken and practiced conscientiously in order to cut down and calm the excessive wantonness and unruliness of the mind and body. They help to restrain and to redirect one’s energy in a direction of higher living, values, and aspirations beyond those of mere selfish pleasure grasping and ego-

gratification. These initial steps will prepare one for the higher training in mental development. Without this initial preparation of one's attitude and outlook towards life and its purpose, there can be no successful, genuine advancement in spiritual awakening and achieving the end of suffering.

## **RIGHT EFFORT**

When one has got at least some of the negative exuberance of the mind tamed and cooled down, he can then introduce right effort to his practice. The Buddha divided right effort into four parts.

The first is that we must become aware of the thoughts going through our mind. Any unwholesome, unprofitable, unskillful states stemming from greed, hatred, lust, pride, conceit, envy, jealousy, or the like must be detected as soon as they arise in the mind. We should not give in to them, but immediately, like a warrior with raised sword, cut them off, reject them, and abandon them, knowing that they are detrimental to our well-being and spiritual progress.

The second part is to keep those negative, unprofitable states from arising again in the future. That is best accomplished if one is diligent and successful in the first part — detecting and eliminating them as soon as they arise, not giving them a chance to grow and overwhelm the heart. In this way they will eventually quit coming into one's mind altogether.

The third aspect of right effort is to cultivate wholesome, profitable, skillful states of mind which normally do not arise in one's mind. This is very much the same as wholesome thinking, and is best done in conjunction with getting rid of negative thoughts. When they arise you immediately replace them with wholesome thoughts of the opposite quality. For example, if a thought of greed or stinginess arises, immediately think thoughts of contentment, of wanting little, of giving to others, and of charity. If the opportunity is such, actually give something to somebody in need with a loving, compassionate attitude. If a thought of anger or ill-will arises, develop thoughts and feelings of friendliness and compassion directed towards the person or object which stimulated the thought to arise.



The fourth aspect is to make those good, positive states of mind grow great and continuous so that the negative states have no opportunity to arise. That is the Noble Effort, and in conjunction with it the seventh step of the Eightfold Path, right mindfulness (*samma-sati*) must be cultivated and continuously exercised, for without awareness of what is going on in your mind and what your body is doing, right effort could never grow to be successful, to achieve what it is meant to achieve, namely, putting an end to suffering.

## RIGHT MINDFULNESS

Right mindfulness is outlined and detailed by the Awakened One in the Four Foundations of Mindfulness as described in the Satipatthana Sutta. The Satipatthana contemplation subjects are unique to a Buddha's Teaching. They have been described by the Buddha as being the direct and sure way to mental purification and the acquiring of Wisdom (Panna).

Mindfulness, in one sense, is being aware and alert to what you are doing and what is going through your mind from moment to moment. *Its function is to enable you to apply right effort to abandon any unprofitable thoughts and to purify the mind of its latent stains and tendencies.*

But right mindfulness is more than just being aware of these things. We must come to know the true nature of the conditioned mind and body and to understand through direct, intimate observation their operation and interaction. We must see the five aggregates of clinging and the sensory cognition process as merely a conditioned, fleeting sequence of phenomena devoid of any permanent indwelling soul, or owner, that is controlling or directing anything. We must cultivate an attitude of detachment based on Wisdom and derived from seeing the true nature of body and mind, and transcend the attachment, bondage, confusion, frustration, and pain brought about by infatuation with them and ignorance of their nature.

The Four Foundations of Mindfulness cover the most important aspects in the practice of mental purification in Buddhism. Whosoever in the past has attained to the liberation of the heart, and whosoever will attain Enlightenment in unsurpassed, perfect Wisdom will use these foundations of mindfulness as the means. This is described in the following suttas.

Monks, suppose there is a border town with strong fortifications, strong walls and towers, and having but a single gate. Over that gate is posted a wise, shrewd, and watchful warden who keeps out strangers and welcomes friends. As he patrols all around that town in due order, he might not notice a crevice in the wall or a hole just big enough for a cat to slip through, but he would think: “Whatever men or creatures of any size who enter or go out of this town, all of them must do so through this single gate.”

Just so, those in past times who were Arahats, fully Enlightened Ones, by abandoning the five hindrances that weaken insight, and being well established in the four foundations of mindfulness, and cultivating the seven Enlightenment factors, did attain Awakening in the unsurpassed perfect Wisdom. They who in future time shall be Arahats, fully Enlightened Ones . . . they shall do likewise.<sup>xvii</sup>

By whomsoever the Four Foundations of Mindfulness are neglected, by them also is neglected the Noble Eightfold Path for the right complete destruction of ill. By whomsoever the Four Foundations of Mindfulness are undertaken and developed, by them also is undertaken and developed the Noble Eightfold Path for utter destruction of ill.

Would one guard oneself, then the Four Foundations of Mindfulness should be cultivated and developed. Would one guard others, then the Four Foundations of Mindfulness should be cultivated and developed. Who guards himself guards others; who guards others guards himself.<sup>xviii</sup>

One thing, monks, if developed and frequently practiced, leads to a deep stirring of the mind, to great benefit, to security from toil, to mindfulness and clear comprehension, to the attainment of knowledge and vision, to a happy abiding in this very life, to realization of the fruits

of knowledge [the four stages of sainthood], and to deliverance, and that is mindfulness concerning the body.<sup>xix</sup>

## **THE FOUR FOUNDATIONS OF MINDFULNESS**

The following is a section of the Satipathana Sutta expounded by the Compassionate Buddha describing the four aspects of contemplation.

This is the sure way, monks, for the purification of beings, for overcoming sorrow and lamentation, for the destruction of suffering and grief, for reaching the right path, for the realization of Nibbana, namely the Four Foundations of Mindfulness.

What are the four? Herein [in this Teaching] a noble disciple lives contemplating the body in the body, ardent, clearly comprehending and mindful, having overcome covetousness and grief concerning the world. He lives contemplating feelings in feelings, ardent, clearly comprehending and mindful . . . He lives contemplating mental states in mental states, ardent, clearly comprehending and mindful . . . He lives contemplating mental objects in mental objects, ardent, clearly comprehending and mindful, having overcome covetousness and grief concerning the world.

### **CONTEMPLATION OF THE BODY**

And how does a noble disciple live contemplating the body in the body? Herein, a noble disciple, having gone to the forest to the foot of a tree or to an empty place, sits down cross-legged, keeping his back erect, and establishes mindfulness in front of him. Ever mindful he breathes in, ever mindful he breathes out. As a skilled turner or his apprentice, when making a long turn, knows, “I am making a long turn” or when making a short turn, knows, “I am making a short turn,” just so, when breathing in a long breath, he knows, “I am breathing in a long breath,” when breathing out a long breath he knows, “I am breathing out a long breath”; when breathing in a short breath he knows, “I am breathing in a

short breath,” when breathing out a short breath he knows, “I am breathing out a short breath.” He trains thus: “I shall breathe in experiencing the whole breath body, I shall breathe out experiencing the whole breath body. He trains thus: “I shall breathe in calming the breath, I shall breathe out calming the breath.”

Thus he lives contemplating the body [of breath] internally in himself or he contemplates it externally [in another person], or he contemplates it both internally and externally. He lives contemplating the origination factors [for the breath to occur], or he lives contemplating the dissolution factors in the body [of breath] and his mindfulness is established with the thought:

“There is body [of breath],” just to the extent of bare knowledge and remembrance of it while he abides independent, detached, not clinging to anything [the five aggregates] in the world. This is how a noble disciple lives contemplating the body [of breath] as just a body [of breath].

And further, a noble disciple reflects on his very body enveloped by skin and full of impurity, from the soles of the foot up, and from the top of the head down, thinking thus: “There are in this body: hair of the head, hair of the body, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, bone marrow, kidneys, stomach, heart, liver, spleen, pancreas, intestines, bladder, brain, feces, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, oil of the joints, saliva, nasal mucous, tears, fat, semen, and urine.”

Just as if there were a double-mouthed provision bag full of various kinds of grain, such as hill paddy, rice, green gram, cow-peas, sesamum, and husked rice, and a man with sound eyes, having opened that bag, were to take stock of the contents thus: “This is hill paddy . . . this is husked rice.”

Just so, a noble disciple reflects on his very body enveloped by skin and full of impurity, from the soles of the feet up, and from the top of the head down, thinking thus: “There are in this body: hair of the body, hair of the head . . . urine.” Thus does he live contemplating the body in the body internally, or he contemplates it externally [that it is the same way in other bodies]. He lives contemplating the origination-factors [how the body comes to be] in the body and he contemplates the

dissolution-factors [how the body breaks up], and his mindfulness is established with the thought: “There is a body,” just to the extent of bare knowledge and remembrance of it while he abides ardent, clearly comprehending and mindful, having overcome covetousness and grief concerning the world, and he clings to nothing.

And further, if a noble disciple sees a body dead one, two, or three days, swollen, blue and black and festering, thrown onto the charnel ground, he then applies this perception to his own body thus: “Verily, also my own body is of the same nature, the same fate will come to it, and will not escape it.”

And further, if he sees a body thrown in the charnel ground, being eaten by hawks, crows, vultures, dogs, jackals and by different kinds of worms, he then applies this perception to his own body . . .

And further, he sees a body thrown onto the charnel ground, reduced to a skeleton with some flesh and blood attached to it, held together by the tendons, he then applies this perception to his own body . . .

He sees a body . . . reduced to a skeleton, without flesh and blood,, held together by tendons . . .

He sees a body . . . the bones scattered in all directions — here a hand bone, there a foot bone, a shin bone, a thigh bone, the pelvis bone, spinal vertebrae, and a skull . . .

He sees a body . . . the bones gone rotten and become dust, and he applies all of these perceptions to his own body thus: “Verily, also my own body is of the same nature, the same fate will befall it and it cannot escape it.”

Thus he lives contemplating the body in the body internally or externally, or both internally and externally. He contemplates the origination-factors and the dissolution-factors in the body, and his mindfulness is established with the thought: “There is the body,” his mindfulness is established precisely to the extent necessary just for knowledge, just for remembrance, and he fares along independently of and not grasping anything in the world. It is thus too, monks, that a monk fares along contemplating the body in the body.

And further, a noble disciple reflects on this very body, wherever it be placed or disposed, by way of the four material elements: “There are in

this body the element of solid, the element of liquid, the element of heat, and the element of air.”

Just as if a clever cow-butcher or his apprentice, having slaughtered a cow and divided it into portions, sitting at the crossroads, does not say he is selling a cow, but merely names the sections of meat. So too, the noble disciple reflects on his own body by way of the four material elements: “This is the solid element, this is the liquid element, this is the heat element, and this is the air element.”

Thus he lives contemplating the body in the body internally or externally or both internally and externally . . . and he abides independent, clearly comprehending and mindful, having overcome covetousness and grief concerning the world, and he clings to nothing.

And further, a noble disciple knows when he is going, “I am going”; he knows when he is standing, “I am standing”; he knows when he is sitting or lying down, “I am sitting” or “I am lying down”; just as his body is disposed, so he knows it. And in going forward and backward, he applies clear comprehension [knowing it is only a four-element compound arranged in 32 functional parts powered by deluded kammic energy]; in looking straight on and looking away, in bending in and stretching out the limbs he applies clear comprehension; in putting on the robe and carrying the bowl, in eating, drinking, chewing, and savoring he applies clear comprehension and mindfulness; in attending to the call of nature, when walking, standing, sitting, laying down, while falling asleep, in waking up, while washing, when speaking, or keeping silent, throughout the day and night in all activities he applies clear comprehension and mindfulness.

Thus, does a noble disciple live contemplating the body in the body internally or externally, or both internally and externally. He dwells contemplating the origination factors in the body and he contemplates the dissolution factors in the body, and his mindfulness is established with the thought: “There is a body,” to the extent necessary just for knowledge and mindfulness, and he abides independent, ardent, clearly comprehending and aware, having overcome covetousness and grief concerning the world, and he clings to nothing.<sup>xx</sup>

Let one further regard his four-element material body as being a source of pain, vulnerable to the attacks of flies, mosquitoes, fleas, and other creeping creatures, from the attacks of nature's elements — heat, cold, wind, rain, etc., subject to disease, sickness, breaking, decay, and death. This is its nature and it cannot escape it. It is doomed to destruction.

Just as when a space is enclosed with timber and bricks and cement, there comes to be the expression in common usage and the utilization of a 'house.' In the same way, when a space is enclosed with bones and pasted together with flesh, tied with sinews and covered with skin, there comes to be the expression in common usage and the utilization of a "body."<sup>xxi10</sup>

This contemplation of the nature of the material body should be thoroughly practiced and seen by right insight as it truly is. Let one apply this insight to his own body and to all bodies in general, and let the truth of it be appreciated. This will enable a person to cultivate an attitude of non-attachment and non-craving for any body, knowing its true nature. In this way he will free himself of those sufferings and grief which arise because of his over-preoccupation with bodies. The Buddha always placed a great emphasis upon, and held in great esteem, this contemplation of the body, as is shown in the following sutta.

“Suppose, monks, a large multitude of people flock together to see the fairest maiden in all the countryside displaying all her charms; dancing for them, singing to them.

“Then along comes a man, fond of his life, fond of ease, loathing pain, fearing death, and someone says to him: ‘See here, my man, here is a bowl brimful of oil. You must carry it around on your head between the crowd and the fairest maiden dancing and singing. Behind you in your tracks comes a man with an uplifted sword. If you spill a drop of oil, off goes your head.’

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<sup>10</sup> The endnote “Majjhima Nikaya 28; (Volume I, p. 236)” cannot be found in *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha, A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya*, translated by Bhikkhu Nanamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi. (Noted by Dhammavamsa)

“Now what do you think: ‘Would that fellow, fond of his life, neglect that bowl brimful of oil on his head, and turn his attention to the crowd and the fairest maiden dancing and singing, losing his mindfulness of the bowl of oil on his head?’

“Surely not, Lord.

“Well, monks, this is a parable I have made for your understanding. This is the meaning of it. The bowl brimful of oil is a term for mindfulness relating to the body.

“Wherefore, you must train yourselves thus: ‘Mindfulness relating to body shall be cultivated and developed by us; it shall be made much of, made a vehicle, established, and made effective. It shall be increased and well applied.’ Thus must you train yourselves.”<sup>xxii</sup>

## **CONTEMPLATION OF FEELINGS**

And how, monks, does a noble disciple live contemplating feelings in feelings?

Herein, a noble disciple when experiencing a pleasant feeling knows, “I am experiencing a pleasant feeling”; when experiencing a painful feeling he knows, “I am experiencing a painful feeling”; when experiencing a neutral feeling he knows, “I am experiencing a neutral feeling.”

Thus he lives contemplating feelings in feelings internally or he contemplates them externally, or he contemplates them both internally and externally. He dwells contemplating the origination factors in feelings, he dwells contemplating the dissolution factors in feeling, and his mindfulness is established with the thought: “Feelings exist,” to the extent necessary for knowledge and remembrance, and he abides independent, ardent, clearly comprehending and mindful, having given up covetousness and grief concerning the world, and he clings to nothing. Thus a noble disciple dwells contemplating feelings in feelings.<sup>xxiii</sup>

Collected, aware, the mindful follower of the Awakened One well understands feelings, how they come to be, where they cease, and [the



way to the end of] feelings. That brother who hath ended them, therefore, no longer hungereth; He is set free, he realizes Nibbana.

Pleasure or pain or feeling that is neutral, the inner and the outer, all that is felt, he knows it to be ill. He sees the world [as] false, perishable; he sees by contact with it that it is transient, and he frees himself.

Just as diverse winds blow in the sky, some blow from the east, some from the west, some from the south, some from the north; dusty winds, dustless winds, hot winds, and cool winds. Even so, in this body arise diverse feelings, feelings pleasant, feelings painful, and feelings neutral.

A monk who is ardent, self-possessed,  
And from substrate free,  
Well understands in his awareness,  
The feelings of all kinds.  
He is drug-immune and when the body dies,  
A Saint, lore-perfect, past our reckoning.<sup>xxiv</sup>

Monks, the untaught manyfolk feel feelings that are pleasant, feelings that are painful, and neutral feelings to which [because of ignorance] they are indifferent.

The well-taught Ariyan disciple also feels the same three feelings. Herein, what is the distinction, what is the specific feature, what is the difference between the well-taught Ariyan disciple and the untaught manyfolk?

The untaught manyfolk, on being touched by feeling that is painful, they weep and wail, they cry aloud, twitch about and beat their breast, they fall into utter bewilderment. For them, they feel a twofold painful feeling, bodily as well as mental pain. Touched by the painful feeling they feel repugnance for it whereby the lurking tendency to repugnance fastens on them, and they delight in pleasant feeling, depend on pleasant feeling. Why so?

Because, monks, the untaught man folk know no refuge from painful feeling save sensual pleasure. By delighting in sensual pleasure the lurking tendency to sensual pleasure fastens on them. They do not understand it as it really is, the arising and passing away of feelings, nor do they understand the [temporary, deluded] satisfaction, the misery, or

the escape from feelings. Then the untaught manyfolk feel the pleasant, or the painful, or the neutral feelings which come upon them, they feel it as one in bondage. This is called “bondage to birth, sorrow, suffering, grief, woe, lamentation, despair, decay, and death.”

But the well-taught Ariyan disciple, when he is touched by a painful feeling, weeps not, wails not, he does not cry aloud, nor twitch about nor beat his breast, he falls not into bewilderment. He only feels the one feeling, the bodily impact of the feeling, and he does not experience any resulting mental pain.

Moreover, he has no repugnance for painful feeling and he desires not for pleasant feeling to relieve him of the painful feeling. Why so? Because, monks, the well-taught Ariyan disciple knows of a refuge from painful feeling, apart from seeking relief in sensual pleasures. He understands, as they really are, the impermanent, fleeting, conditioned, soulless nature of feelings and he understands the satisfaction, the misery, and the escape from feelings as well. No lurking tendencies to the three types of feelings fasten in his heart, and he dwells experiencing feelings as one freed from the bondage of birth, sorrow, suffering, grief, woe, lamentation, despair, decay, and death He is set free from suffering.

Such, monks, is the distinction, the specific feature, the difference between the common untaught manyfolk and the well-taught Ariyan disciple.

Not swayed by feelings is the Sage,  
Neither ease nor pain affecteth him of knowledge wide,  
Between the wise and the worldly-one,  
Vast is the difference in goodliness.  
A searcher of the Norm [Truth], of knowledge wide.  
Who rightly views this world and that beyond,  
Is not heart-harassed by things desired,  
By undesired things he is not repelled;  
His likes and dislikes are blown away, departed,  
Are no more.  
Knowing the stainless and sorrow-less path to Deathlessness.



He rightly knows, becoming he has over-passed.<sup>xxv</sup>

Whatsoever recluses or Brahmins do not understand as they really are the arising, the ceasing, the satisfaction, the misery, and the escape from these three feelings, they are not approved of, nor considered worthy, neither by me nor among other recluses and Brahmins.

But those recluses or Brahmins who do fully understand these things, they are approved of and considered worthy, both by me and among other wise men . . . they have realized the fruit of living the Holy Life, even in the present life.<sup>xxvi</sup>

## **CONTEMPLATION OF MIND-STATES**

In this contemplation one becomes aware of the varieties of mental states, or moods, which the mind assumes from time to time, mental states such as anger, ill will, stinginess, kindness, pride, happiness, sadness, greediness, confusion, restlessness, and so forth.

We must learn to be mindful of those moods the moment they start to arise, and see them as they really are: as impermanent, conditioned, and without self-nature. In that way the mind can remain detached, not getting itself involved in a lot of useless agitation and worry that it normally would bring down upon itself. So we should cultivate equanimity to all these habit-induced mental reactions and learn to control them, knowing we do not have to be slaves to them.

And how, monks, does a noble disciple live contemplating the mind in the mind?

Herein, a noble disciple knows the mind with lust, as with lust; he knows the mind without lust, as without lust; he knows the mind with hate, as with hate; the mind without hate, as without hate; he knows the mind with delusion, as with delusion; the mind without delusion, as without delusion; he knows the distracted mind as being distracted; he knows the concentrated mind as being concentrated; he knows the depressed mind as such, he knows the happy mind as such; he knows the

stingy mind, he knows the generous mind; he knows the mind with conceit, as being with conceit; he knows the mind without conceit, as without conceit; he knows the mind with arrogance, as with arrogance; and he knows the mind without arrogance, as without arrogance: he knows a jealous mind, he knows an envious mind, he knows a humble mind, he knows a scheming mind; he knows the mind with compassion, as being with compassion.

Thus he lives contemplating mind states in mind states internally or he contemplates them externally [when he sees others with these states of mind], or he contemplates them both internally and externally; he dwells contemplating the origination factors and dissolution factors in mental states and his mindfulness is established with the thought; “mental states exist” to the extent necessary just for knowledge and remembrance and he abides independent, detached, clearly comprehending and mindful, having overcome covetousness and dejection concerning the world, and he clings to nothing.

Thus does a noble disciple live contemplating mind states in mind states.<sup>xxvii</sup>

## CONTEMPLATION OF MENTAL OBJECTS

The Buddha has laid out in this fourth foundation of mindfulness various subjects for analysis and observation. These concern mental objects which are the objects of our experience. The meditator is to observe and examine these things to understand their true nature. By diligently contemplating these phenomena, the meditator will come to get a deeper and richer insight into the Dhamma.

The first subject for contemplation is the five mental hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*) which defile and cloud the mind, preventing any real success in concentration. These five are: sense desire (*kamacchanda*), anger or ill will (*vyāpāda*), mental laziness and sluggishness (*thīna-middha*), restlessness and worry (*uddhacca-kukkucca*), and skeptical doubt (*vicikicchā*) about what one is doing by meditating and so on. These hindrances are obstructions to meditation and they weaken one’s ability to develop insight

and progress in spiritual awakening. The meditator should apply a detached and bare attention to them as they arise, acknowledging their presence, but freeing himself from their intoxicating influence so that he may attain the higher stages of insight.

Herein a noble disciple, when sense desire arises in him, he knows, “sense desire has arisen,” when ill will arises in him he knows, “ill will has arisen”; when sloth and torpor arises in him he knows, “sloth and torpor has arisen”; when restlessness and worry arises in him he knows, “restlessness and worry has arisen”; when skeptical doubt arises in him he knows, “skeptical doubt has arisen”; he knows when these hindrances are present in him and he knows when they are absent in him. He knows how these defilement come to be, and he knows how once arisen they can be made to disappear, and he knows how they are kept from invading his mind in the future.

Thus he dwells contemplating the mental objects in the five hindrances internally and externally or he contemplates them both internally and externally. He knows the origination factors and the dissolution factors in these five mental hindrances and his mindfulness is established with the thought: “These hindrances exist,” just to the extent necessary for knowledge and mindfulness, and he abides ardent, detached, clearly comprehending and mindful, having overcome covetousness and dejection concerning the world, and he clings to nothing. <sup>xxviii</sup>

Suppose, monks, a man borrowed a loan and undertook works and the works succeeded so that he repaid all the money of the old loan and there remained over some extra for his wife and children; then on considering that, he was glad and joyful. Or, suppose a man was afflicted, suffering, and gravely ill and his food did not sustain him and his body had no strength. But later he recovered from the affliction and his body gained health and strength; or suppose a man were imprisoned in a prison-house, but later he was released safe and sound with no loss to his property: then on considering that, in all these cases, those men were exceedingly glad and joyful.

So too, monks, when these five hindrances which weaken understanding and insight are not abandoned in oneself, he sees them respectively as a debt, a disease, a prison-house, and a bondage. But when they are abandoned in himself, he sees that as un-indebtedness, health, release from prison, freedom from bondage, and a land of safety.<sup>xxix</sup>

The second subject of contemplation is that of the five aggregates of grasping and clinging (*khandha*): material form (*rūpa*), feelings (*vedanā*), perceptions (*sannā*), the mental formations (*sankhāra*), and consciousness (*vinnāna*).



Herein a monk thinks, “Thus is material form, thus is the arising of material form, thus is the passing away of material form; thus is feeling, thus is the arising of feeling, thus is the passing away of feeling; thus is perception, thus is the arising of perception, thus is the passing away of perception; thus is a mental formation, thus is the arising of mental formation, thus is the passing away of mental formation; and thus is consciousness, thus is the arising of consciousness, thus is the passing away of consciousness. [He contemplates these when and where they arise as being just such].

He contemplates them internally or he contemplates them externally or he contemplates both internally and externally. He contemplates the origination factors and he contemplates the dissolution factors in the five aggregates of grasping (because, for example, of ignorance and craving they come to be; with the ceasing of ignorance and craving, they cease to be), and his mindfulness is established with the thought: “the five aggregates of grasping and clinging exist,” to the extent necessary just for knowledge and mindfulness. He abides having overcome covetousness and grief concerning the world and he clings to nothing. Thus does one live contemplating mental objects in the five aggregates of grasping.<sup>xxx</sup>

The third subject in the contemplation of mental objects is that of the six-fold sense sphere.

Herein, a monk knows the eye and he knows visual objects, and he knows the fetter which arises dependent on both; he knows how the arising of the fetter comes to be [because of attachment], and he knows how the abandoning of the arisen fetter comes to be [by wisdom], and he knows how the non-arising in the future of the fetter comes to be [increased mindfulness and wisdom].

He knows the ear and sounds; he knows the nose and odors; he knows the tongue and flavors; he knows the body and objects of touch; he knows the mind and the mind-objects; he knows the fetter which has arisen dependent on both; he knows how the arising of the fetter comes to be, and he knows how the abandoning of the arisen fetter comes to be, and he knows how the non-arising in the future of the fetter comes to be.

Thus a monk dwells contemplating the mental objects in the six-fold sense sphere internally or externally or both internally and externally. He dwells contemplating the origination factors and the dissolution factors of the six-fold sense sphere [when there is birth and development of the sense organs and contact with the world, the sense sphere is completed; when the body perishes or any sense organ is impaired totally, then the sense-sphere is not complete and does not function] and his mindfulness is established with the thought: “The six-fold sense sphere exists,” to the extent necessary for knowledge and mindfulness. He abides independent, clearly comprehending and mindful, having overcome covetousness and dejection concerning the world, and he clings to nothing. <sup>xxxii</sup>

The next subject to be cultivated and developed through mindfulness is that of the Seven Factors of Enlightenment (*bojjhanga*). These are necessary mental qualities for the purification of the mind qualities which prepare the mind for its penetrating wisdom and the realization of Nibbana. These seven factors are: the enlightenment factor of Mindfulness (*sati*<sup>Ⓞ</sup>), the enlightenment factor of Investigating Dhamma (*dhamma-vicaya*<sup>Ⓞ</sup>), the enlightenment factor of Energy [to practice] (*virīya*<sup>Ⓞ</sup>), the enlightenment

factors of Joy (*pīti*<sup>4</sup>), Tranquility [of body and mind] (*passaddhi*<sup>6</sup>), Concentration (*samadhi*<sup>6</sup>), and Equanimity [mental equipoise] (*upekkhā*<sup>7</sup>).

Herein a monk knows when any of these enlightenment factors are present in him; he knows when they are not present in him. He knows how the arising of the previously non-arisen enlightenment factors comes to be; he knows how perfection in the development of the enlightenment factors comes to be.

Thus a monk, dwells contemplating the mental-objects in the Seven Factors of Enlightenment internally or externally, or both internally and externally. He dwells contemplating the origination factors and the dissolution factors in them, and his mindfulness is established with the thought: “the factors of Awakening exist,” to the extent necessary for knowledge and mindfulness, and he abides independent, clearly comprehending and mindful, having overcome sorrow and hankering for the world, and he clings to nothing.<sup>xxxii</sup>

The last subject in the contemplation of mental objects is that of the Four Noble Truths themselves. If you see an incident of suffering or recognize it in yourself, then you should thoroughly contemplate it then and there as follows.

Herein a noble disciple knows: “this is suffering” according to reality; he knows, “this is the arising of suffering” [ignorance, attachment, and craving] according to reality; he knows, “this is the cessation of suffering” (the absence of ignorance, attachment, and craving) according to reality; he knows, “this is the path leading to the cessation of suffering” [the Noble Eightfold Path] according to reality.

Thus a noble disciple dwells contemplating the mental objects in the Four Noble Truths, internally, or externally, or both . . . and his mindfulness is established with the thought: “The Four Noble Truths exist,” to the extent necessary for knowledge and mindfulness, and he lives independent, ardent, clearly comprehending and mindful, having overcome covetousness and grief concerning the world, and he clings to nothing.



Whosoever, monks, should thus develop these four foundations of mindfulness for seven years, one of two fruits is to be expected: either the realization of Nibbana here and now [Arahatship], or if there is any Kamma residue remaining, the state of non-returning. But let alone seven years, whosoever should develop these four foundations of mindfulness for six years . . . five years . . . four years . . . three years . . . two years . . . one year . . . six months . . . five . . . four . . . three . . . two . . . one month . . . two weeks . . . But let alone two weeks, whosoever, monks, should develop these four foundations of mindfulness for only seven days, one of two fruits is to be expected for him: either the realization of Nibbana here and now, or if there is any Kamma residue remaining, the state of non-returning. <sup>xxxiii</sup>

Monks, those who are novices, not long gone forth from home, newcomers into this Dhamma and discipline, such new monks should be roused and admonished and exhorted and encouraged in cultivating the Four Foundations of Mindfulness.

You should say this to those novices: “Come ye, friends, do ye abide contemplating the body [and all material objects] as being transient, fleeting away, a source of sorrow and soulless . . . ardent, composed, self-resolute, clearly comprehending, and mindful, for insight into the body as it really is. Likewise do ye abide contemplating feelings in feelings; do ye abide contemplating mind states in mind states; do ye abide contemplating the mental objects in the mental objects; seeing all of these as they really are — transient, fleeting away, a source of sorrow, and soulless.

For such reasons, monks, those who are novices, not long gone forth from the home, newcomers into this Dhamma and discipline, such ones should be roused, admonished, instructed, and encouraged in the cultivation and development of these Four Foundations of Mindfulness. <sup>xxxiv</sup>

So it can be seen that the Buddha highly regarded the practice of satipatthana. That way of seeing and regarding things should be practiced in all of its various aspects so that a complete, rounded, and realistic view of

one's body and mind and its existence in the phenomenal world is developed. That should be frequently practiced and made the base from which all one's thoughts and actions in daily life are performed. It should be integrated into one's life so that, whenever there is an opportunity to apply any one aspect to a situation we may apply the appropriate mindfulness then and there. Do not merely fall prey to, and be overcome by, a situation, whether good or bad. Use it as a means to apply and develop insight. By cultivating awareness to all the different aspects of satipatthana at each and every moment of life we can quickly and steadily develop the insight wisdom which will penetrate straight through the veils of ignorance and delusion and land us on the further shore of true freedom, Nibbana, even in this life.

Further, by practicing these Four Foundations of Mindfulness they will help keep us out of mischief and unfortunate situations. They act as a protection so that we will not fall into heedlessness or carelessness, which would bring hurt and sorrow where otherwise, without mindfulness, we might fall. This is described in the following suttas.

### **THE MONKEY AND THE QUAIL**

Monks, there are in the Himalayas tracts of level country, delightful spots where both monkeys and humans do resort. In those spots a hunter sets a trap of pitch in the monkeys' tracks to catch the monkeys.

Now those monkeys who are free from folly and greed, on seeing that pitch-trap, keep far away from it. But a greedy, foolish monkey comes up to that pitch and handles it with one paw, and his paw sticks fast in it. Then thinking: "I will free my paw," he seizes it with the other paw, but that too sticks fast. To free both paws he seizes them with one foot, and that too sticks fast. To free both paws and the one foot he lays hold of them with the other foot, but that too sticks fast. To free both paws and both feet he lays hold of them with his muzzle, but that too sticks fast.

So that monkey, thus trapped by his folly and greed in five ways, lies down and howls, thus fallen on misfortune, fallen on ruin, a prey for the

hunter to work his will upon. So the hunter spits and prepares him for eating there and then over a charcoal fire, and takes his delight.<sup>xxxv</sup>

And again “Once upon a time, monks, a she-falcon suddenly swooped down and seized a quail. Then the quail, while it was being carried away, thus lamented: ‘Just my bad luck, my lack of merit: It serves me right for trespassing outside my own pasture onto others property. If I had kept to my own ancestral beat today, this she-falcon would not have caught me.’

‘Why quail,’ said the falcon, ‘what is your own native beat?’

‘Tis a freshly plowed up field, a place all covered with clods,’ said the quail.

“Well, monks, the she-falcon losing her concentration, relaxed her effort of holding the quail and dropped it, letting the quail go free. So the quail went off to a plowed field, to a place all covered with big clods, perched on a great clod and stood challenging the falcon thus: ‘Now come on you falcon! Now come on you falcon!’



“Well, monks, the she-falcon, putting forth her effort, not aware of the situation, and folding both her wings, swooped swiftly down upon the quail. As soon as the quail saw this he thought: ‘Here comes the falcon fill tilt upon me and slipped inside the clod. But the falcon, monks, shattered her breast thereon.

“So it is, monks, for one who goes roaming out of his own pasture onto others’ property. Wherefore, roam ye not outside your own pasture onto others’ property. To those who so roam, Mara will get access, in them Mara will find support.

“And what is not one’s own pasture, but other’s property? It is the five kinds of physical sense pleasures: material forms cognizable by the eye, desirable, charming, delightful, passion-fraught, and alluring; sounds cognizable by the ear . . . scents cognizable by the nose . . . savors cognizable by the tongue . . . tangibles cognizable by the body, desirable, charming, delightful, passion-fraught, alluring. This is not one’s own pasture but others’ property, in the case of a monk.

“Monks, do ye range your own pasture, keep to your own ancestral beat. To those who range their own pasture, Mara will get no access, he will find no support.

“And what is a monk’s own pasture, his own ancestral beat? It is the Four Foundations of Mindfulness. What four?

“Herein, a monk dwells contemplating the body in the body, feelings in feelings, mind states in mind states, and mental objects in mental objects, ardent, clearly comprehending and mindful, having overcome covetousness and grief concerning the world, and he clings to nothing. This, monks, is a monk’s own pasture, his own ancestral beat.”<sup>xxxvi</sup>

Just as the elephant hunter drives a huge stake into the ground and chains the wild elephant to it by the neck in order to drive out of him his wonted forest ways and wishes, his forest unruliness, obstinacy, and forest violence and to accustom him to the environment of the village, and to teach him such good behaviors as is required amongst men. In a like manner also should a noble disciple fix his mind firmly to these Four Foundations of Mindfulness, so that he may drive out of his mind his wonted worldly ways and desires, his worldly unruliness, obstinacy, and violence, win to the true, and realize Nibbana.<sup>xxxvii</sup>

## RIGHT CONCENTRATION

The last aspect of the Noble Eightfold Path is called *Samma-Samadhi*. This is translated as “right concentration,” *but more precisely it is wholesome mental composure, or unification of mind*. It is a gradual practice of calming and stilling the monkey-mind from its habitual tendency to wander here and there wherever it pleases. The mind normally jumps from sense stimulus to sense stimulus, never satisfied with one thing more than just briefly, continuously being attracted to one thing after another.

*Samma-Samadhi* brings the fluctuations of consciousness to a state of calm and tranquility, one-pointed unification, composure. In that state the

mind is free from any outside disturbing influences so that nothing can disrupt or infect its calm and blissful nature.



Awareness becomes like a clean, spotless mirror which simply and passively reflects the presence of anything that comes into its range. *It doesn't comment on what's there, or like it or dislike it, or try to analyze it.* In that state insight can be quickly developed because the waves of clouding thought are stilled enough for one to clearly experience what is happening at subtle levels, in the normally unconscious processes of sensory perception. One can perceive the activities and true nature of the six-fold sense sphere and the five aggregates quite clearly. Samadhi is not an end practice in itself, but is practiced in order to facilitate the arising of insight by applying *satipatthana* awareness.

The Buddha has described forty various subjects or objects for developing samadhi. Some are more conducive than others to reducing and tranquilizing the thought processes and bring the mind to deeper levels of calm. Some are merely subjects of discursive thinking which suppress only the grosser disturbances, but, nevertheless, they instill in the meditator a deep understanding of what is being contemplated. What one chooses depends upon one's own needs and temperament, but mindfulness of breathing (*anapanasati*), is the most praised by the Buddha. It is suitable for almost all persons as a means for slowing and subduing the mind's habitual discursive thinking patterns and grasping after sense experiences. By practicing this "composing the mind" during periods of sitting meditation on the chosen object (i.e., the breath) one is able to attain the four successive levels of mental purity called the *jhanas*. These four *jhanas* are termed "pleasant abiding here and now" because they suppress the five hindrances temporarily and induce great bliss and joy. They are attained in four progressive states, each reducing the amount of mental activity connected with sense perception until the mind achieves inner equilibrium, or mental composure (equanimity).

The Buddha has described these four meditative absorptions and how they are attained, one by one, in the following sutta.

By getting rid of the five hindrances which are defilements of the mind weakening to intuitive wisdom, then aloof from pleasures of the senses, aloof from unskilled states of mind, the noble disciple enters on and abides in the first meditative absorption [*jhana*], which is accompanied by initial and sustained thought, is born of aloofness [isolation from outside sensory impingements] and is rapturous and joyful. He drenches, saturates, permeates, and suffuses his very body with the rapture and joy that are born aloofness; there is not part of his body that is not suffused with the rapture and bliss that are born of aloofness.

As a skilled bath attendant, having sprinkled bath powder into a bronze vessel, might knead it together with drops of water until the ball of lather has taken up moisture, is drenched and saturated with moisture inside and out, but there is no oozing; even so does a noble disciple, having entered into the meditative absorption, drench . . . with the rapture and bliss that is born of aloofness; there is no part of his whole body that is not thus soaked.

And again, a noble disciple, by allaying initial and sustained thought, with the mind subjectively tranquilized and fixed on one point [i.e., the touch of breath at the nostril tip], enters and abides in the second meditative absorption which is devoid of initial and sustained thought, is born of concentration, and is rapturous and blissful. He drenches, saturates, permeates, and suffuses his entire body with the rapture and bliss that is born of concentration.

If a pool of water has cool water welling up from within its depths, but has no inlet on any side, then that current of cool water would drench, saturate, permeate, and suffuse that pool with cool water.

Even so does a noble disciple drench . . . his very body with the rapture and bliss that is born of aloofness, and there is no part of his body that is not so soaked with that happiness.

And again, a noble disciple, by the fading out of rapture, dwells with equanimity, attentive and clearly conscious, and he experiences in his person that joy of which the Ariyan say: “Joyful lives he who has

equanimity and is mindful,” and he enters on and abides in the third meditative absorption. He drenches . . . his very body with the joy that has no rapture.

As in a pond of white, red, or blue lotuses, some of those lotuses are born in the water, grow up in the water, never rising above the surface but flourishing beneath it; these from their roots to their tips are drenched, saturated, permeated, and suffused by cool water. Even so, the noble disciple, having entered into the third meditative absorption, drenches . . . and there is no part of his whole body that is not suffused and soaked with the joy that has no rapture.

And again, a noble disciple by getting rid of even joy and by getting rid of sorrow, by the going down of his former pleasures and sorrows, enters on and abides in the fourth meditative absorption which is utterly purified by equanimity and mindfulness. He suffuses his very body with a mind that is utterly clean, utterly pure [purified of even rapture, joy, bliss, etc.].

As one who has sat down and has clothed himself, including his head, with a pure white cloth, his whole body wrapped in and suffused by that pure white cloth, even so, a noble disciple, having suffused his very body with a mind that is utterly clean, utterly pure, there is no part of his whole body that is not so suffused by a mind that is utterly pure with pure bright cognizance.<sup>xxxviii</sup>

This completes the explanation of the eight aspects of training which comprise the Noble Eightfold Path. These eight necessarily have to be practiced together, each helping to support and strengthen the other, as described in the following sutta.

Now in understanding wrong view as being wrong, and right view as being right, one practices right view; and in making efforts to overcome wrong view and to arouse right view, one practices right effort; and in overcoming wrong view with an attentive mind and dwelling with mindfulness in the possession of right view, one practices right mindfulness. Hence there are these three things that accompany and

follow upon each other, namely: right view, right effort, and right mindfulness.

Now in understanding wrong thought as wrong and right thought as right, one practices right view; and in making efforts to overcome unwholesome thoughts and to arouse wholesome thoughts, one practices right effort; in abandoning an unwholesome thought with an attentive mind, dwelling with mindfulness, one practices right mindfulness. Hence there are these three things that accompany and follow upon right thought; right view, right effort, and right mindfulness.<sup>xxxix</sup>

And the same thing is said of right speech, right action and right livelihood. To properly practice each of these there must necessarily be the right understanding of why one is cultivating it. And there must also be the application of the proper effort, or else progress will not be made. And without mindfulness of what one is doing success cannot be achieved.

And what is the Noble Ones' right concentration with its causes and equipment? It is any unity of mind that is equipped with right view, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort and right mindfulness.<sup>xl</sup>

The Noble Eightfold Path can also be divided into three general areas of development. These broader groups are

**Sila** — This is virtue, or moral conduct. It consists of right speech, right action and right livelihood.

**Samadhi** — This is concentration. It consists of right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration.

**Pañña** — This is wisdom or understanding. It consists of right view and right thought.

These three general divisions of development are also interrelated and practiced simultaneously. Again, the initial mundane or intellectual understanding is necessary to begin any work which will consciously cultivate and develop virtue. The practice of *sila* is based on understanding,



not just blind belief. Then successful practice and growth in the rest of the training can proceed smoothly and balanced, with a firm grounding on virtue.

This question was put to the Buddha.

*The inner tangle and the outer tangle,  
This generation is entangled in a tangle [of Kamma].  
And so I ask of Master Gotama this question:  
Who succeeds in disentangling this tangle?*

This was the Buddha's reply.

*When a wise man, well established in virtue,  
Develops concentration and wisdom,  
Then as a monk ardent and sagacious,  
He succeeds in disentangling this tangle.<sup>xli</sup>*

Here is a brief commentary on the second stanza.

A wise man possessing right view, establishes himself firmly in the practice of virtue [right speech, action, and livelihood]. He then develops concentration [right effort, mindfulness, concentration]. Thus he acquires a deeper, more profound wisdom. He is possessed of energy [ardent] in the sense of burning up or getting rid of the defilements. He is sagacious. It is understanding that is called sagacity. Understanding is of three kinds: native understanding, understanding consisting in insight, and the protective understanding that guides all affairs. So he is possessed of energy and protective understanding. He sees fear in the rounds of rebirths. He succeeds in disentangling this tangle; just as a man standing on the ground and taking up a well sharpened knife might disentangle a great tangle of bamboos, so too, he who, standing on the ground of virtue and taking up with the hand of protective understanding, exerted by the power of energy, the sword of insight-wisdom that has been well sharpened on the stone of concentration, he might well disentangle, put away, and demolish all the tangle of ignorance and craving that had overgrown his own life's continuity.

But it is at the moment of the Path [attainment of Stream Entry] that he is said to be really disentangling the tangle, because at that moment he has succeeded [at least in part] in disentangling this tangle. [He has destroyed the three lower fetters which equals about fifty percent of his ignorance and kammic involvement, and is bound for Nibbana]. That is why the Blessed One said

*When a wise man, established well in virtue,  
Develops Concentration and Wisdom,  
Then as a monk ardent and sagacious  
He succeeds in disentangling this tangle.*<sup>xlii</sup>

The Buddha often gave counsel to the monks thus:

Such and such is Virtue; such and such is Concentration; such and such is Wisdom. Great becomes the fruit, great is the gain of concentration when it is fully developed and grounded on virtuous conduct. Great becomes the fruit, great is the gain of wisdom when it is fully acquired by concentration. Utterly freed from the taints of lust, of becoming, and ignorance is the mind that is fully developed in wisdom [has realized Nibbana].<sup>xliii</sup>



## CHAPTER VI

# DEVELOPING THE MIND

In the development of the Noble Eightfold Path the Buddha has specified Five Spiritual Powers, or faculties, which are to be developed and balanced so that concentration and mindfulness can be cultivated and wisdom developed, thereby destroying the fetters and enabling us to realize the fruits of the Path (Sotapanna, Arahantship). These Five Spiritual Powers are: faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom, which are described in the following suttas.

What is the power of faith? Herein, monks, a noble disciple has faith; he believes in the enlightenment of the Buddha: “This indeed is the Blessed One, holy, fully Enlightened, endowed with clear vision and pure conduct, sublime, the knower of worlds, the incomparable leader of men to be tamed, the teacher of gods and men, enlightened and holy.”<sup>i</sup>

“So long, monks, as faith exists in things wholesome, that which is evil and unwholesome will not gain entry. But when faith [in the good] has vanished and there is no belief [in the good], then what is evil will gain entry.”<sup>ii</sup>

What is the power of energy? Herein, monks, a noble disciple lives with energy set upon the abandoning of everything unwholesome and acquiring of everything wholesome; he is steadfast and strong in his efforts, not shirking his task in doing things that are good and wholesome [the effort of purifying his mind of lust, hate, delusion, and the like].

So long as there is energy directed to things good and wholesome, then what is evil and unwholesome will not gain entry. But when such energy and perseverance has vanished and indolence concerning the good takes a hold and prevails, then what is evil and unwholesome will gain entry.

What is the power of mindfulness? Herein, a noble disciple is mindful; he is equipped with the keenest mindfulness and circumspection; he remembers well and keeps in mind what has been said and done long ago.

What is the power of concentration? Herein, a noble disciple has cast away the five hindrances . . . he enters and abides in the first . . . second . . . third . . . fourth meditative absorptions.

What is the power of Wisdom? Herein, a noble disciple is wise; he is furnished with that wisdom which sees into the impermanence and soulless-ness of all phenomena which is noble and penetrating, and leads to the complete destruction of suffering.

So long as there is wisdom concerning things wholesome, then what is evil and unwholesome will not gain entry. But when such wisdom has vanished and ignorance concerning things good and wholesome takes a hold and prevails in one's mind, then what is unwholesome will gain entry.<sup>iii</sup>

## QUESTIONS FROM KING MILINDA

The King said, "Venerable Nagasena, what is the characteristic mark of faith?"

"Tranquilization, O King, and aspiration."

"And how is tranquilization a mark of faith?"

"As faith, O King, springs up in the heart it breaks through the five hindrances — lust, malice, mental sloth, spiritual pride, and doubt — and the heart, free from these hindrances, becomes clear, serene, untroubled."

"Give an illustration."

"Just as, O king, a suzerain king, when on the march with his four-fold army, might cross over a small stream, and the water, disturbed by the elephants and cavalry, the chariots and bowmen, might become fouled, turbid and muddy. And when he was on the other side the king might give commands to his attendants, saying: 'Bring some water, my good men, I would fain drink.'"

“Now suppose the king had a water-cleansing gem, and those men, in obedience to the order of the king, were to throw the gem into the water. Then at once all the mud would precipitate itself, and the sandy atoms of shell and bits of water plants would disappear, and the water would become clear, transparent, and serene, and they would then bring some of it to the king to drink. The water is the heart; the royal servants are the noble disciple; the mud, the sandy atoms, and the bits of water plants are evil dispositions; and the water cleansing gem is faith.”

“And how is aspiration the mark of faith?”

“Inasmuch as the noble disciple, on perceiving how the hearts of others have been set free [by the Buddha’s teachings], aspires to enter, as it were, by a leap upon the fruit of the first stage [stream-entry], or of the second [once-returner, *sakadagami*], or the third stage [non-returner, *anagami*] in the Excellent Way, or to gain Arahathship itself. He thus applies himself to the attainment of what he has not reached, to the experience of what he has not yet felt, to the realization of what he has not yet realized. Therefore is it that aspiration is the mark of faith.”

“Give an illustration.”

“Just as, O King, if a mighty storm were to break upon a mountain top and pour out rain, the water would flow down according to the levels, and after filling up the crevices and chasm and gullies of the hill, would empty itself into the brook below, so that the stream would rush along, overflowing both its banks. Now suppose a crowd of people, one after the other, were to come up and, being ignorant of the real breadth or depth of the water, were to stand fearful and hesitating on the brink. And suppose a certain man should arrive who, knowing exactly his own strength and power, should gird himself firmly and, with a spring, land himself on the other side. Then the rest of the people, seeing him safe on the other side, would likewise cross. That is the kind of way in which the noble disciple, by faith, aspires to leap, as it were, by a bound, into higher things. For this has been said, O King, by the Blessed One:

‘By Faith he crosses over the stream,

By Earnestness the sea of life;  
By Steadfastness all grief he stills,  
By Wisdom is he purified.”

“Well put, Nagasena! What, Nagasena, is the characteristic mark of perseverance [effort]?”

“The rendering of support, O King, is the mark of perseverance. All those good qualities which it supports do not fall away.”

“Give me an illustration.”

“Just as a man, if a house were falling, would make a prop for it of another post, and the house so supported would not fall; just so, O King, is the rendering of support the mark of perseverance and all those good qualities [mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom] which it supports do not fall away.”

“Give me a further illustration.”

“Just as when a large army has broken up a small one, then the king of the latter would call to mind every possible ally and call for their assistance to reinforce his small army, and by that means the small might in turn break up the large one; just so, O King, is the rendering of support the mark of perseverance, and all those good qualities which it supports do not fall away. For it has been said by the Blessed One: ‘The persevering hearer of the noble truth, monks, puts away evil and cultivates goodness, puts away that which is wrong and develops in himself that which is right, and thus does he keep himself pure.’”

“Well put, Nagasena!”

“What, Nagasena, is the characteristic mark of Mindfulness?”

“Repetition, O King, and keeping up.”

“And how is repetition the mark of Mindfulness?”

“As Mindfulness, O King, springs up in his heart he repeats over the good and evil, right and wrong, slight and important, dark and light qualities, and those that resemble them, saying to himself: ‘These are the four modes of keeping oneself ready and mindful [the Four Foundations of Mindfulness], these the four modes of spiritual effort [right effort], these are the four bases of extraordinary powers, these are the five organs of the moral sense, these are the five mental powers, these are the

Seven Factors of Enlightenment, these are the eight divisions of the Noble Eightfold Path; this is serenity and this is insight, this is wisdom and this is emancipation.’ Thus does the noble disciple follow after those qualities that are desirable and not follow after those that are not; thus does he cultivate those which ought to be practiced, and not those which ought not. That is how repetition is the mark of Mindfulness.”

“Give me an illustration.”

“It is like the treasurer of the imperial sovereign, who reminds his royal master early and late of his glory, saying: ‘So many are thy war elephants, O King, and so many thy cavalry, thy war chariots, and thy bowmen, so much the quality of thy money, gold, and wealth. May your Majesty keep yourself in mind thereof.’”

“And how, Sir, is keeping up a mark of Mindfulness?”

“As mindfulness springs up in his heart, O King, he searches out the categories of good qualities and their opposites, saying to himself: ‘Such and such qualities are good, and such and such bad; such and such qualities are helpful, and such a hindrance.’ Thus does the noble disciple make what is evil in himself to disappear, and keeps up what is good. That is how keeping up is the mark of Mindfulness.”

“Give me an illustration.”

“It is like the confidential advisor of the imperial sovereign who instructs him in good and evil saying: ‘These things are bad for the king and these good, these helpful and these a hindrance.’ And thus the king makes the evil in himself die out, and keeps up the good.”

“Well put, Nagasena!”

“What, Nagasena, is the characteristic mark of concentration?”

“Being the leader, O King. All good qualities have concentration as their chief, they incline to it, lead up towards it, are as so many slopes up the side of the mountain of concentration.”

“Give me an illustration.”

“As all the rafters of the roof of a house go up to the apex, slope towards it, are joined together at it, and the apex is acknowledged to be the top of all — so is the habit of concentration in its relation to other good qualities. And further, O King, it is like a king when

he goes down to battle with his army in its fourfold array. The whole army — elephants, cavalry, war chariots, and bowmen — would have him as their chief, their lines would incline towards the king, lead up to him, they would be as so many mountain slopes, one above another, with him as their summit; around him they would all be ranged. And it has been said, O King, by the Blessed One: ‘Cultivate in yourself, monks, the habit of concentration. He who is concentrated herein knows things as they really are.’”

“Well put, Nagasena.”

“What, Nagasena, is the characteristic mark of wisdom?”

“Cutting off, severance, is the mark of Wisdom, but Enlightenment is also its mark. By wisdom the noble disciple cuts off his defilements. And when wisdom springs up in the heart, O King, it dispels the darkness of ignorance, it causes the radiance of knowledge to arise, it makes the light of intelligence to shine forth, and it makes the Noble Truths plain. Thus does the noble disciple, who is devoted to effort, perceive with the clearest wisdom, the impermanency, the suffering [that is inherent in mind and matter], and the absence of any soul.”

“Give me an illustration.”

“It is like a lamp. O King, which a man might introduce into a house in darkness. When the lamp had been brought in it would dispel the darkness, cause radiance to arise, and light to shine forth, and make the objects there plainly visible. Just so would wisdom in a man have such effects as were just now set forth.”

“Well put, Nagasena”

“These qualities [the five powers of faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom], which are so different, Nagasena, do they bring about one and the same result?”

“They do. The putting an end to evil dispositions.”

“How is that? Give me an illustration.”

“They are like the various parts of an army — elephants, cavalry, war chariots, and archers — who all work to one end, to wit: the conquest in battle of the opposing army.”

“Well put, Nagasena.”<sup>iv</sup>



The following is a selection of suttas by the Buddha to describe many different aspects of training.

The Venerable Ananda once asked the Blessed One this question.

“Pray, Lord, is there any one state which, if cultivated and made much of, brings four states to completion? Do four states, if cultivated and made much of, complete seven states? Do seven states, if cultivated and made much of, complete two states?”

“Yes, Ananda, there is one state which does complete four, four states complete seven, and seven complete two. What are they?

“Intent concentration on in-breathing and out-breathing, Ananda, is the one thing which if cultivated and made much of, brings the four foundations of mindfulness to completion. The four arisings of mindfulness brings the Seven Factors of Enlightenment to completion, and they in turn complete knowledge and release.

“And how cultivated do the Four Foundations of Mindfulness bring the Seven Factors of Enlightenment [① *sati*, mindfulness; ② *dhamma-vicaya*, investigation of reality; ③ *viriya*, effort; ④ *piti*, joy; ⑤ *passaddhi*, tranquility; ⑥ *samadhi*, concentration; and ⑦ *upekkha*, equanimity] to completion?

“At such time as a noble disciple dwells contemplating the body in the body, feelings in feelings, mind states in mind states, and mental objects in mental objects, ardent . . . at that time his mindfulness is not relaxed and the enlightenment factor of mindfulness is established in him. Then it is that the noble disciple is cultivating the enlightenment factor of mindfulness, and by continued cultivation it comes to completion in him.

“At such time as a noble disciple is thus dwelling mindful, he investigates those states by insight, comes to close scrutiny of it [sees them as impermanent, soulless, etc.]. Then it is that the enlightenment factor of Dhamma investigation is being cultivated, and when much practiced, comes to completion in him. And as he investigates those states by insight, as he examines it, comes to close scrutiny of it, unwavering energy is established in him.

“At such time, Ananda, as unwavering energy is established in a noble disciple, so investigating, so examining, coming to close scrutiny of those states, then it is that the enlightenment factor of energy is being cultivated, and owing to that cultivation it comes to completion in him. And as he is so established in mindful investigation and energy, there arises in him a joy for the energy which he has established, [a joy not] connected with sense desire.

“At such time as joy not connected with the senses arises in a noble disciple whose energy is established, the enlightenment factor of joy is being cultivated and, owing to continued cultivation, it comes to completion in him. In one who is filled with joy, the body is tranquilized and mind is tranquilized.

“At such time, Ananda, as the body and mind of a noble disciple who is joyous are tranquilized, the enlightenment factor of tranquility is being cultivated, and owing to continued cultivation it comes to completion in him. In him whose body and mind are tranquilized, who is happy, the mind becomes concentrated.

“When, Ananda, in a noble disciple whose body and mind is tranquil, who is happy, and the mind concentrated, at that time the enlightenment factor of concentration is established, and with continued practice it, comes to completion in him. He who is thus concentrated and composed becomes a thoroughly disinterested onlooker of his mind [equanimous].

“Now, Ananda, when a noble disciple is a thoroughly disinterested onlooker of his mind thus composed, at such time the enlightenment factor of equanimity is established and, owing to continued practice, it comes to completion in him.

“Thus cultivated, Ananda, thus made much of the four arisings of mindfulness complete the Seven Factors of Enlightenment.

“Now, Ananda, how cultivated, how made much of, do the Seven Factors of Enlightenment complete knowledge and release?

“Herein, a noble disciple cultivates the enlightenment factor which is mindfulness, which tends to seclusion, tends to dispassion, to relinquishment, and tends to readiness for self-surrender [giving up the notion of ‘I’]; he cultivates the enlightenment factor which is Dhamma investigation, which tends to seclusion . . . readiness for self-surrender;

he cultivates the enlightenment factor of energy . . . joy . . . tranquility . . . concentration . . . equanimity, which tends to seclusion, to dispassion, to relinquishment, and to readiness to self-surrender.

“Thus cultivated, made much of, Ananda, do the Seven Factors of Enlightenment bring knowledge and release to completion.”<sup>v</sup>

“Monks, there are certain times when some of the enlightenment factors should not be cultivated, and some of them should be cultivated. What are they?”

“At such time as the mind is sluggish, then is the wrong time for cultivating the enlightenment factors of tranquility, of concentration, and of equanimity. Why so? Because when the mind is sluggish it is hard to raise it up by these practices.”

“Suppose a man wants to make a little fire blaze up. If he heap thereon wet grass, wet cow dung, and wet sticks: if he expose it to rain and wind and sprinkle it with dust, tell me monks, would that man, be able to make that little fire blaze up?”

“Surely not, Lord.”

“Just so, at such time as the mind is sluggish, that is the wrong time for cultivating the enlightenment factors of tranquility, concentration, and equanimity, because when the mind is sluggish it is hard to raise it up by these practices.”

“But at such time as the mind is sluggish, then it is the right time for cultivating the enlightenment factors of Dhamma investigation, or energy, and of joy. Why So? Because the sluggish mind is easily raised up by such practices.”

“Suppose a man wants to make that little fire blaze up. If he heap thereon dry grass, dry cow dung, and dry sticks; if he blow it up with his mouth, if he sprinkle it not with dust, then would that man be able to make that little fire blaze up?”

“Surely Lord.”

“Just so, at such time as the mind is sluggish, then it is the proper time for cultivating the enlightenment factors of Dhamma investigation, energy, and joy, because the sluggish mind is easily raised up by such things.”

“At such time, monks, as the mind is elated, then it is the wrong time for cultivating the enlightenment factors that are Dhamma investigation, energy, and joy. Why? Because the elated mind is hard to calm by these practices.”

“Suppose a man wanted to quench a great fire. If he heap thereon dry grass . . . would he be able to quench that great fire?”

“Surely not, Lord.”

“Just so, at such time as the mind is elated, then it is the wrong time for cultivating the enlightenment factors of Dhamma investigation, energy, and joy, because the elated mind is hard to calm by these practices.

“However, at such time when the mind is elated, then it is the proper time to cultivate the enlightenment factors of tranquility, concentration, and equanimity. Why? Because the elated mind is easily calmed by such practices.”<sup>vi</sup>

## REFINEMENT OF THE MIND

“Monks, one devoted to higher mental training should from time to time give attention to these three items; concentration, energetic effort, and equanimity. If one devoted to higher mental training should give exclusive attention to the item of concentration, it is possible that his mind may fall into indolence. If he should give exclusive attention to the item of energetic effort, it is possible that his mind may fall into restlessness. If he should give exclusive attention to the item of equanimity, it is possible that his mind will not be well concentrated upon the destruction of the cankers [defilements, the ten fetters].

“But if, from time to time, he gives attention to each of these three items, then his mind will be pliant, workable, lucid, and not unwieldy, and it will be well concentrated upon the destruction of the cankers

“Suppose a goldsmith builds a furnace, lights a fire in its opening, takes the gold with a pair of tongs and puts it into the furnace. From time to time he blows on it, from time to time he sprinkles water on it, from time to time he examines it closely. If he were to blow on the fold

continuously it might be heated too much. If be continuously sprinkled it with water, it would stay too cool. If he were only to look at it, the gold would not come to perfect refinement. But if, from time to time, the goldsmith attends to each of these three functions, the gold will become pliant, workable and bright; and it can easily be molded, and he is able to make with that gold any ornament he wishes.

“Similarly there are these three items to which one devoted to higher mental training should pay attention from time to time: concentration, energetic effort, and equanimity . . . it will be well concentrated upon the destruction of the cankers.

“To whatever mental state realizable by higher supernormal knowledge he directs his mind, in that very object he achieves the capacity of realizing it by higher supernormal knowledge whenever the necessary conditions obtain.”<sup>vii</sup>

“Further O monks, in the case of one devoted to higher mental training, there are in him gross impurities, namely, wrong conduct in deeds, words and thoughts. Such conduct he gives up, puts it away, makes an end of it, not allowing it to recur.”

“When he has abandoned these, there are still impurities of a moderate degree that cling to one devoted to higher mental training, namely, sensuous, angry, and violent thoughts. Such thoughts he gives up, puts them away, and makes an end of them, not allowing them to recur.”

“When he has abandoned these, there are still some subtle impurities that cling to one devoted to higher mental training, namely, thoughts about his relatives, his home country, and his reputation. When he has abandoned these there still remain thoughts about the higher mental states [experiences in meditation].”

“That concentration is not yet calm nor refined; it has not attained to full tranquility nor has it achieved mental unification; it is maintained by strenuous suppression of the defilements.”

“But there comes a time when his mind gains firmness within, settles down, becomes unified and concentrated. That concentration is then calm and refined: he has attained to full tranquility and achieved mental

unification. It is not maintained by a strenuous suppression of the defilements.”

“Then to whatever mental state realizable by higher supernormal knowledge he directs his mind, in that very object he achieves the capacity of realizing it by higher super-knowledge, whenever the necessary conditions obtain.”<sup>viii</sup>

## **SENSE DESIRES**

Monks, “peril” is a name for sense desires, “pain” is a name for sense desires, “disease” is a name for sense desires, “tumor” . . . fetter . . . “morass” is a name for sense desires.

And why, is “peril,” etc., a name for sense desires?

Inflamed by sensual passion and in bondage to lustful desire, neither is one free of the peril, pain, the disease, the tumor, the fetter and the morass of this world nor of the next world.<sup>ix</sup>

If there is no sense control, monks, then the basis for morality is destroyed for him who lacks self-control. If there is no morality, then the basis for right concentration is destroyed for him who lacks morality. If there is no right concentration, then the basis for realistic knowledge and vision is destroyed for him who lacks right concentration. If there is no realistic knowledge and vision [insight], then the basis for revulsion and dispassion [from being a slave to one’s passion] is destroyed for him who lacks realistic knowledge and vision. If there is no revulsion and dispassion [from being imprisoned in Samsara], then the basis for the knowledge and vision of deliverance is destroyed for one who lacks revulsion and dispassion.

This is as in the case of a tree: if a tree has no branches and foliage the buds will not mature, nor will the bark, the greenwood, and the heartwood mature. Similarly, if sense control is absent, there will be no basis for morality . . . concentration . . . realistic knowledge, vision, and so on.

But if there is sense control, monks, then this will provide a basis for morality. With morality as a basis for concentration, realistic knowledge

and vision, revulsion and dispassion, and knowledge and vision of deliverance will develop.

This is as in the case of a tree: if a tree has its branches and foliage intact, the buds will mature and so the bark, greenwood, and heartwood. Similarly, if sense control is present, this will provide a basis for morality, concentration and wisdom.<sup>x</sup>

Poverty, monks, is suffering in the world for one who enjoys sense pleasures [who is addicted and infatuated by them].

And if a pauper, one destitute and indigent, gets into debt; his indebtedness, too, is suffering in the world for one who enjoys sense pleasures.

And if that poor man, being indebted, promises to pay interest; this payment of interest, too, is suffering in the world for one who enjoys sense pleasures.

And if that poor man cannot pay the interest that falls due and he is pressed [by the creditors]; such pressure, too, is suffering in the world for one who enjoys sense pleasures.

And if, being pressed, that poor man still cannot pay and the creditors are constantly after him; such a harassment, too, is suffering.

And if being harassed and still unable to pay, that poor man is thrown into jail; this imprisonment, too, is suffering in the world for one who enjoys sense pleasures.

Similarly, monks, it is with anyone who lacks faith in the things that are good, who has no shame as to good principles, no scruples as to good principles, no energy [for producing effort] in things that are good, no understanding of things that are good. Such a one is called [spiritually] poor, destitute, and indigent in the Discipline of the Noble Ones.

If, now, such a man who is poor, destitute, and indigent through his lack of faith, shame, scruples, energy, and understanding concerning the Good, conducts himself badly in deeds, words, and thoughts, I call this his getting into debt.

If, for covering up his bad conduct in deeds, words, and thoughts, he harbors in himself evil wishes; if he desires, plans, chooses his words,

and tries to act in such a way that nobody may come to know his nature — this I call the interest [to be paid on his moral debts].

Then virtuous brethren in the Holy Life speak about him thus: “This venerable monk acts thus; he behaves in such and such a way.” This I call the pressure on him.

If he resorts to the forest, the foot of a tree, or a solitary place [for meditation], his mind is pursued by unwholesome, evil thoughts connected with remorse. This I call is his being harassed.

Such a [morally] poor, destitute, and indigent man of bad conduct, after the breakup of his body, on his death, will be bound by the bonds of hell or the bonds of the animal world. And I know of no other imprisonment, monks, that is so cruel, so harsh, so painful, and is such an obstacle to attaining the Incomparable Security from Life’s Toil (Nibbana), as the bonds of hell and of the animal world.”<sup>xi</sup>

One day Siha the General addressed the Blessed One as follows “I have heard it said, Venerable Sir, that the recluse Gotama is a teacher of inaction, that he teaches his doctrine [the Dhamma] for inculcating a life of inaction, and in that he trains his disciples. Is this correct, Master Gotama?”

“There is indeed a way, Siha, in which one can rightly say of me that I am a teacher of inaction; and there is also a way in which one can say that I am a teacher of action.

“I do teach men to be inactive as to evil conduct in deeds, words and thoughts; I teach inaction in regard to a multitude of evil and unwholesome things. But I also teach men to be active by way of good conduct in deeds, words, and thoughts.

There is also a way in which one can say I am an annihilationist. For I teach the annihilation of greed, hatred, and delusion; I teach the annihilation of a multitude of evil and unwholesome things.<sup>xii</sup>

## **SENSUAL PLEASURES**

“Monks, when one knows as they really are the arising and the destruction of all states of ill, then indeed sensual pleasures are seen by



him. When he sees sensual pleasures, that infatuation, that feverish longing for sensual pleasures, which is therein, does not fasten on him, bog him down. His path abroad and his lodging at home are so practiced that, in such a way of life, coveting and dejection, those evil, unprofitable states, do not fasten on him.”

“And how does he know, as they really are, both the arising and the destruction of all states of ill? He knows such and such is body, such is the arising of body, such is the ceasing of body. Such is feeling, such is perception, such are the activities, such is consciousness, such is the arising and the passing away [destruction] of feeling, perception, activities, and consciousness.”

“That is how he knows, as they really are, both the arising and the destruction of states of ill.”

“And how monks, are sensual pleasures seen [attachment to them] in such a way that, so seeing sensual pleasure, that love of sensual pleasures that is therein does not fasten on his heart, bog him down?”

“Suppose there were a pit of glowing charcoal, deeper than a man’s height, full of charcoal, without flame and smokeless. And suppose a man should come, fond of life, not loving death, but loathing pain. Then two strong men lay hold of him, one by each arm, and drag him to the pit of charcoal. He would writhe his body to and fro. Why so? Because monks, that same man would know: I shall fall into this pit of charcoal. Owing to that I shall come by mortal pain or death.”

“Even so, monks, one sees sensual pleasures in the likeness of a pit of glowing charcoal, and so seeing, that love of sensual pleasures, that infatuation, and that feverish longing for sensual pleasures, does not over spread his heart and bog him down.”

“And how does one so practice his path abroad and his lodging at home that, so practicing, so dwelling, covetousness and dejection, those evil, unprofitable states, do not fasten on him?”

“Suppose a man should enter a forest full of thorns. To the east and west of him are thorns. Whenever he advances or retreats he has the thought: ‘May no thorns pierce me.’”

“Just so, monks, whatever object in the world, be it of mind or of matter, dear and delightful, that in the Ariyan discipline is called a thorn.

By so understanding are restraint and non-restraint to be understood. And how comes non-restraint?”

“Herein, one experiencing an object through one of the six doors is attracted and attaches his mind to the objects which are dear, he is averse from objects that displease. He dwells with attention to the body distracted, and his thought is mean: He knows not that emancipation of the heart by wisdom whereby those evil, unprofitable states that have arisen come to cease.”

“And how comes restraint?”

“Herein so seeing, experiencing an object [of the inner or outer world] . . . he is not attracted, does not attach his mind to . . . is not averse to objects that displease . . . he dwells with attention fixed on body, and his thought is boundless . . . he knows that emancipation of heart by wisdom . . .”

“Even so, monks, comes restraint.”

“In one so practicing, so dwelling, sometimes and full seldom, through loss of self control, there do arise evil unprofitable states, memories and hopes that are akin to the fetters that bind. Weak is the arousing of his mindfulness, but quickly he abandons such a state, puts it away, wipes it out, makes it go to utter destruction.”

“Just as if a man should let fall two or three drops of water into an iron pot, heated all day long, that mere trickle of water drops is soon wiped out, annihilated, and used up. Even so in one so dwelling his mindfulness is weak to arise, but it does arise quickly thereafter, and he is able to abandon, put it away, annihilate, destroy those evil, unprofitable states, memories, and hopes akin to fetters that bind in no long time.”

“Thus if one practices his path abroad and his lodgings at home in such a way of life, that coveting and dejection, those evil, unprofitable states, do not overwhelm his heart.”

“Suppose the king’s royal ministers or friends should bring and offer wealth to a monk so practicing and living, and say: ‘Come, good man. Why should these yellow robes torment you! Why do you parade about with shaven crown and bowl! Come! Return to the lower life, enjoy possessions and do deeds of merit!’ But for that monk so practicing, so

living, to reject the training and return to the lower worldly life is an impossible thing.”

“Suppose the river Ganges, that slopes, inclines, leads, and is gravitated towards the ocean, to the East, and a great crowd of folk should come with shovel and pick and baskets saying: ‘We will make this River Ganges reverse its direction, to slope, incline, and lead to the west!’ What think ye: Would that great crowd of folk be able to make the River Ganges so slope, incline, and lead to the West?”

“Surely not Lord.”

“And why not?”

“Because Lord, it would be no easy thing to reverse the direction of the flow of the river Ganges from East to West insomuch that fatigue and vexation would be the lot of all that great crowd of folk.”

“Even so, monks, for one so practicing, so living the righteous life, for many a long day that brother’s heart has been bent on detachment, inclined to detachment, turned toward detachment, there is no possibility for him to return to the lower life despite any attempt by kings, or relatives, [or by anyone else]. That monk’s heart is bound for Nibbana.”<sup>xiii</sup>

## THE TORTOISE

Formerly, monks, a tortoise, a shellback, was questing for its meal at evening-tide along a river bank. A jackal came along questing for some creature to devour. So drawing in its limbs and head into its shell, the tortoise crouched down in safety and kept still. Then the jackal saw that shellback from afar, came up to it, and kept a close watch on it with the thought: “As soon as this tortoise puts outside one or other of its limbs or head, I will seize it, crack its shell, and eat it.” But as the tortoise did not venture to stick out any of its limbs or head, the jackal after some time got disgusted and wearied with the shellback and went away, not having got a chance.

Even so, monks, Mara, the evil one, is forever on the watch with the thought: “May be I shall get a chance to catch one of these sense objects by way of eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, or mind.” Wherefore, you do

keep watch [mindfulness] over the doors of the sense faculties, applying such control as to not be misled by the outer qualities or the lesser details of objects. In this way coveting, unskillful, unprofitable states won't have a chance to arise, and Mara will go away in disgust, rejected, not getting a chance, just as the jackal did not get a chance at the tortoise. Be ye like the tortoise, the shellback, and ye will conquer Mara.

Even as the tortoise in its own shell-shelter withdraws its  
limbs, so may the noble disciple,  
Holding heart composed, intent, leaning on naught, injuring  
never his neighbor, from evil and danger wholly freed,  
speak ill of no man.<sup>xiv</sup>

## LOG OF WOOD

Now the Blessed One saw a great log being carried down the Ganges River, and on seeing it he said to the monks: “Monks, do ye see yonder that great log being carried down the River Ganges?”

“Yes, Lord.”

“Now, monks, if the log does not ground on this bank or that bank, does not sink in mid-stream, does not stick fast on a sandbar, does not fall into human hands, is not caught by non-humans, is not caught in a whirlpool or does not rot inwardly — that log will float down to the ocean. And why? Because the Ganges river floats down to the ocean, slides down, tends down, and is gravitated towards the ocean.”

“In a like manner, monks, if ye do not ground on this bank or that bank . . . as above . . . ye will float down to Nibbana, ye shall slide down, tend towards and gravitate towards Nibbana. And why? Because this Holy Life, the Noble Eightfold Path with right view, and the rest, floats, slides, tends, and gravitates toward Nibbana.”

“And what is ‘this bank’? That is a name for the internal sense-bases; ‘that bank’ is a name for the external objects of sense; ‘sinking in mid-stream’ is a name for getting dragged under by desire or lust; ‘being caught on a sandbar’ is a term for the ‘I am’ conceit; ‘being caught by humans’ is when a monk gets pulled back in to society’s net, makes a link with all manner of business that befalls, or gives up his robes and

returns to lay life; ‘being caught by non-humans’ is when a monk lives with the desire to be reborn among the devas or in the Brahma worlds; ‘being caught in a whirlpool’ is a term for the pleasure and misery inherent in the five physical sense objects; ‘rotting inwardly’ is a term for a monk who lives immorally, an evil doer, impure, of suspicious behavior, of covert deeds, not confessing his transgressions, though a recluse in vows, rotten within and full of lusts. This is rotting inwardly.”<sup>xv</sup>

These eight worldly conditions, monks, keep the world turning round, and the world turns around these eight worldly conditions. What are the eight?

Gain and loss, repute and disrepute, praise and blame, joy and woe. These eight worldly conditions are encountered by an uninstructed worldling, and they are also encountered by an instructed noble disciple. What now, monks, is here the distinction, the peculiarity of, and the difference between an instructed noble disciple and an uninstructed worldling?

When an uninstructed worldling comes upon gain, loss, repute, disrepute, praise, blame, joy, and woe, he does not reflect on it thus: “This gain, loss, praise, blame, etc., that has come to me, is impermanent, liable to cause pain, and is bound to change.”

He does not know them as they really are. With such a person, gain, praise, flattery, loss, and so forth keep his mind engrossed. When gain comes he is elated and when there is loss he is dejected. By praise and flattery he is elated and by blame he is dejected. When he has a joy he is elated and when there is woe he is dejected. Being thus involved in likes and dislikes, he will not be freed from being born and dying, from experiencing sorrow and lamentation, pain, grief, and despair; he will not be free from suffering.

But, monks, when an instructed noble disciple comes upon gain, praise, flattery, loss, blame, joy, woe, etc., he will reflect on it thus: “This gain, praise, loss, blame, and so on, that has come upon me, is impermanent, liable to cause pain, and is bound to change.” And he understands all these conditions as they really are. With him gain, loss,

and so forth will not engross his mind. Thus with gain he will not be elated and not be dejected by loss. By praise and flattery he will not be elated and by blame he will not be dejected. By joy he will not be elated and by woe not dejected. Having thus given up likes and dislikes, he will be freed from being born and dying, from sorrow and lamentation, grief and despair; he will be released from suffering.

This is here the distinction, the peculiarity of, and the difference in this matter between an instructed noble disciple and an uninstructed worldling.

**L**oss and gain, obscurity and fame,  
Praise and blame, joy and woe —  
These things are transient in the life of men,  
Inconsistent and are bound to change.  
**T**he mindful one and wise, discerns them well  
And is observant of their constant change.  
Things pleasant do not stir his mind  
And those unpleasant do not irritate.  
**A**ll likes and dislikes are dispensed by him,  
Have come to end and are no more.  
Aware now of a stainless, griefless state,  
Beyond existence gone, he fully knows.<sup>xvi</sup>

## THE SIX ANIMALS

Suppose, monks, a man catches six animals of diverse range and of diverse pasturage, and tethers them with a stout rope to a strong post. He catches a dog and tethers it with a stout rope to the strong post. Also a snake, a crocodile, a bird, a jackal and a monkey, does he tether with a stout rope — all to the same post. Having done so, he ties them together with a knot in the middle and sets them going. Now those six animals of diverse range and of diverse pasturage would struggle to be off, each one to his own range and pasture. The dog would struggle thinking, “I’ll enter the village”; the snake, “I’ll enter the ant hill”; the crocodile would think, “I’ll enter the water”; the bird, “I’ll fly into the air”; the jackal

would think “I’ll go to the charnel ground”; and the monkey would think, “I’ll be off to the forest.”

Now, not being able to get loose, when those six hungry animals grew tired and weary they would follow after the one of them who is the stronger, they would conform to that one, become subject to him.

Even so monks, in whosoever attention to body is not practiced, not made much of, neglected each of the senses struggle to pull him to the objects of their range or pasturage that charm, are delightful to experience. Repulsive to him are objects that displease. This, monks, is called non-restraint.

And how, monks, is restraint?

Suppose those same animals, tethered to the post, after struggling some time, became tired and weary, they would have to stand, crouch, or lie down close to the post. Even so, in whosoever mindfulness of body is established and made much of, the senses do not struggle to pull him with objects that charm and unpleasant objects are repulsive to him. They have been played out, grown tired, have come to rest, and that brother can dwell at ease, untroubled, with his thought boundless. He understands as it really is the emancipation of the heart by wisdom, whereby those evil, unprofitable states that have arisen come immediately to cease without remainder.

Wherefore, monks, thus must ye train yourselves: “We shall practice attention to the body. It shall be made much of, ridden on, built upon, striven with, accumulated, and thoroughly undertaken.”<sup>xvii</sup>

## **RESIDENT PUPIL**

Without a resident pupil and without a teacher, monks, is this righteous life to be lived. One who dwells with a resident pupil or dwells with a teacher, dwells disturbed, troubled, not at ease. How is that?

Herein, in one who experiences or contacts an object of one of the senses, there arise evil, unprofitable states, memories and hopes akin to states that bind. These states are resident in him. Hence he is called “co-resident.”

Those evil, unprofitable states beset him. Therefore he is called “dwelling with a teacher,” because they teach him about suffering. Thus one who dwells with a resident pupil and who has a teacher, he dwells not at ease.

Without a resident pupil, without a teacher, one dwells happily and at ease.<sup>xviii</sup>

Four good thoroughbred horses, monks, are found in the world. What four?

There is one good thoroughbred horse which, just on seeing the shadow of the goad of his master, is alerted and feels stirred, thinking, “What task will my trainer set me today? Should not I obey him?” Of such a type is one good thoroughbred horse.

Again, there is another good thoroughbred horse that is not alerted and stirred by merely seeing the shadow of the goad, but when his hair is touched with the goad he is alerted and stirred, [thinking] “What task will my trainer set me today? Should I not obey him?” Of such a type is the second good thoroughbred horse.

Again, there is a third good thoroughbred horse that is not yet alerted and stirred by seeing the shadow of the goad nor when his hair is touched by it, but when his skin is pricked by the goad, he becomes alerted and stirred, thinking, “What task . . . ?” Of such a type is the third good thoroughbred horse found in the world.

Again, there is a fourth good thoroughbred horse that is not yet alerted and stirred by seeing the shadow, or his hair being touched, or his skin being pricked by the goad of his master but, when pierced by the goad to the very bone, he is alerted and stirred, thinking, “What task . . . ?” Of such a type is the fourth good thoroughbred horse found in the world.

Similarly, monks, four good thoroughbred men can be found in the world. What four?

In this case, there is a good man who hears it said “In such a village or town a woman or man is ailing or has died.” Thereby he is moved and stirred; he strives earnestly [to purify the defilements in his mind]. With his mind fully dedicated, he realizes in his own person the supreme truth, penetrating it with Wisdom.



Again, there is a second good thoroughbred man who does not hear it said, but sees it himself that some man or woman has died. Thereby he is moved and stirred and strives earnestly [to purify his mind before he dies].

Again, there is a good thoroughbred man who neither hears or sees that some man or woman has died; but a kinsman of his, a close relation, is ailing or has died. Thereby he is moved and stirred.

Again, there is a fourth good thoroughbred man who neither hears, nor sees, nor it happened to a close relation, illness or death; but he himself becomes afflicted with great bodily pains that are severe, sharp, piercing, utterly painful, endangering his life. Thereby he is moved and stirred. Being moved and stirred, he strives earnestly. With his mind dedicated, he realizes in his own person the supreme truth and sees it by penetrating it with Wisdom. Just as one good, thoroughbred horse . . . is alerted and stirred only when the goad pierces it to the very bone, so, as similar to it, I speak of this good thoroughbred man.

These are the four good thoroughbred men found in the world.<sup>xix</sup>

## **IS THERE A METHOD?**

“There is a method, monks, by following which one apart from belief or inclination or hearsay, apart from argument as to method, apart from reflection on reasons or delight in speculations, could affirm insight thus: ‘Ended is birth, lived is the righteous life for the complete right destruction of ill, done is the task, for life in these conditions there is no hereafter.’”

“And what is that method? Herein, one upon beholding an object of one of the six senses, either recognizes within him the existence of lust, malice, and illusion, thus: ‘I have lust, malice, or illusion,’ or he recognizes the non-existence of these states within him thus: ‘I do not have lust, malice, or illusion co-resident within me.’”

“Now, as to that recognition of their existence or nonexistence within him, are these conditions, I ask, to be understood by belief, or hearsay, or argument, or delight, and so on?”

“Surely not, Lord.”

“Are not these states to be directly comprehended and seen with the eye of wisdom?”

“Surely, Lord.”

“Then, monks, this is the method by following which, apart from belief, inclination, hearsay, argument, speculation, reflection on reason or delight, one could affirm insight thus: ‘Ended is birth . . . for life in these conditions there is no hereafter.’”<sup>xx</sup>

## THE SAP TREE

“If in anyone that lust, that lure, that hankering, that infatuation, that malice which arises in the mind due to objects cognized by the six-fold sense sphere be not abandoned, put away, then whenever trifling objects (not to speak of considerable objects) come into the sphere of the senses, they overspread the heart.

“Suppose monks, a sap-tree, either a Bo tree or a banyan or a fig tree or any other young tender tree, is standing in the forest. Then if a man with a sharp ax cuts into it, wherever he does so the sap flows out, does it not?”



“Yes, Lord.”

“Why so?”

“Because sap is in it, Lord.”

“Just so, monks, if that lust or lure, that infatuation or malice which arises in the mind be not abandoned, put away, then whenever objects come into the sphere of the senses they overspread the heart. But if they be abandoned, put away, made non-existent, then they do not overspread the heart.”

“Just as if that same tree were far gone in years, dried up, sapless past its season, and a man were to cut into it with a sharp ax, would sap flow out?”

“Surely not, Lord.”

“Why not?”

“Because all the sap has dried up, has come to naught.”

“Just so, in anyone in whom lust and hankering, infatuation and malice, are abandoned, put away, cut off at the roots, cease to arise, then even considerable objects (let alone trifling objects which come into the domain of the senses) do not overspread the heart. That, monks, is the end of ill.”<sup>xxi</sup>

## KOITHIKA

Then the Venerable Kotthika,, rising from his solitude at evening-tide, went to visit the Venerable Sariputta. After an exchange of greetings and courtesies he sat down at one side and so spoke to the Venerable Sariputta: “How is it, friend Sariputta? Is the eye the bond of visual objects or are visual objects the bond of the eye? [The same for the other sense organs and stimuli] Is the mind the bond of mental states or are mental states the bond of the mind?”

“Not so, friend Kotthika. These are not the bond of each other, but that desire, that lust and infatuation, that grasping which arises owing to the coming together of these two, that is the bond.”

“Suppose, friend, two oxen, one white and one black, are tied by one rope or one yoke-tie. Would it be right so say that the white ox is the bond for the black ox or that the black ox is the bond for the white one?”

“Surely not, friend, it is not so. But the rope of the yoke-tie which bring the oxen together, which binds the two — that is the bond that unites them”

“Just so, friend, so it is with the organs of sense and their objects. It is the desire and lust, the hankering and grasping rooted in the mind, which arises on account of them, that form the bond between the sense organs and their objects and produces becoming. If, friend, the sense organs were the bond of their objects, or if objects were the bond of the sense organs, then this Holy Life lived for the utter destruction of ill could not be proclaimed. But since it is not so, but the desire, lust, infatuation, craving, and grasping which arise in the mind on their account is the bond, therefore can this Righteous Life for the utter destruction of suffering be proclaimed.”

“There is in the Blessed One, friend Kothhika, an eye, an ear, a nose, a tongue, body, and a mind, but in the Blessed One there is no desire, lust, infatuation, or clinging to things of the world. Wholly heart-freed is the Blessed One. Therefore does the Blessed One proclaim such a doctrine for the complete right destruction of ill.”<sup>xxii</sup>

## **DEVELOPING THE MIND**

Three types of persons are found in the world. What three? There is one with a mind like an open sore, one with a mind like lightening, and one with a mind like a diamond.

Of what nature is the person with a mind like an open sore? He is one who is irascible and very irritable. If anything is said to him, even a trifling matter, he will lose his temper, get angry and upset; he resents it and displays anger, hatred and sulkiness. Just as a festering sore, if struck by a stick or clod, will discharge matter all the more, even so is a certain person irascible . . . and displays anger, hatred, and sulkiness. Such a person is said to have a mind like an open sore.

And of what nature is the person with a mind like lightning? He is one who understands according to reality: “This is the cessation of suffering”; [the non-attachment to things of the world including his own mind]; he understands according to reality: “This is the path leading to the cessation of suffering” [the Noble Eightfold Path]. Just as a man with good eyesight can see objects in the darkness of night by a flash of lightning, even so a person understands the Four Noble Truths according to reality. Such a person is said to have a mind like lightning.

And of what nature is a person with a mind like a diamond? He is one who, after the destruction of the cankers [an Arahāt], comes to know directly by himself, in this very life, the heart’s liberation and the liberation by wisdom, and having realized it, abides therein. Just as there is nothing, be it gem or rock, that diamond cannot cut, even so a certain person, after the destruction of the cankers, comes to know . . . Such a person is said to have a diamond-like mind.

These three types of persons are found in the world.<sup>xxiii</sup>

## GOOD SLEEP

Once the Blessed One was staying in the country and had his resting place on a heap of leaves spread out on a cattle track in a forest. At that time a certain prince of the neighboring district passed by that spot where the Blessed One was sitting on his bed of leaves in the middle of the forest. That prince approached the Blessed One and saluted him and sat down to one side. So seated he spoke to the Blessed One thus:

“Pray, Venerable Sir, has the Blessed One slept well?”

“Yes, Prince, I slept well. Among those in the world who sleep well, I am one.”

“But, Venerable Sir, the winter nights are cold and this is a week when there is frost. Hard is the ground trampled by the hoofs of the cattle, thin is the spread of leaves, sparse are the leaves on the trees, cold are your tawny robes, and cold blows the wind. Yet the Blessed One says that he has slept well and that he is one of those in the world who always sleep well.”

“Now, Prince, I shall put to you a question about this and you may reply as you think fit. What do you think of this, Prince? There is a householder, or a householder’s son, in a house with a gabled roof, which is plastered inside and out, protected against wind, with fastened door, bolts, and windows closed. And there is a couch in the house, spread with a long-fleeced, black, woolen rug with a bedspread of white wool, a coverlet decorated with flowers, spread with an exquisite antelope skin, having a canopy overhead and scarlet cushions at each end. Also a lamp is burning there and his four wives attend on him pleasantly. What do you think, Prince, would that person sleep well or not? What is your opinion about it?”

“He will surely sleep well, Venerable Sir. He will be one of those in the world who sleep well.”

“What do you think, Prince? Might there not arise in that householder, or householder’s son, vexations of body or mind caused by lust, desire, anger, hatred, or caused by delusion, confusion, worry, or remorse, which would cause him to steep badly, restlessly, which would torment him in his sleep?”

“That may be well so, Venerable Sir.”

“Now, Prince, the lust, desire, infatuation, anger, hatred, delusion, confusion, worry, and remorse which cause him to sleep badly, which torment him while he tries to sleep, those defilements of mind have been abandoned by the Tathagata, cut off at the root, made like a palm tree stump, unable to grow again or to arise in the future, whereby the mind would be disturbed. Therefore, Prince, that is why I have slept well, and why I am one of those in the world who always sleep well.”

He who is utterly set free,  
The Holy One sleeps always well.  
By lust's desires unstained is he,  
Serene and from attachments free  
Who, cutting through all bonds,  
Removed all smarting pains of heart.<sup>xxiv</sup>



## CHAPTER VII

# USING THE DHAMMA WISELY

**T**he Buddha was merely pointing out the practice that needs to be done. Each person will have to practice according to his present level of kammic involvement, whether as a layman or a monk. There were some laymen in the Buddha's time who were more highly attained than some monks. The practice does not depend so much on what you wear or how you look or what you do, but on whether you do it skillfully from the Kamma result point of view. Each person should take the spirit of what is being said in these instructions, knowing what has to be done, but also recognizing his own kammic situation, and mold the practice to fit his own needs. Some will progress more slowly or quickly than others. You should not compare your practice or progress to that of others. Just do your own practice, helping others when you can.

### **SIMILE OF THE SNAKE**

Suppose a man, wanting a snake, saw a large snake, and when he wrongly grasped it by its coils or its tail, it turned and bit him, on which account he came to death or mortal pain. Why? Because of his wrong grasp of the snake.

So too, some misguided men learn the Law [Dhamma] without examining the meaning [true spirit] of the Teaching with understanding, so they do not acquire a liking for meditating upon them. They learn it, instead, for the sake of carping and rebuttal of criticism, or for honor or fame. They fail to appreciate the purpose for which the Dhamma should be learned [why the Buddha taught it]. Then, after a while they find that the law, being wrongly grasped by them, conduces to their harm and suffering for a long time.

But suppose a man who wanted a snake saw a large one, and when he caught it in a forked stick and rightly grasped it behind the head, then

even though the snake might wrap its coils about the man's arms or legs, still the man would not on that account come to death or mortal pain.

So too, some men or women of good family learn the law and examine the meaning with understanding, so that they acquire a liking for meditating on it, not learning it for the sake of carping and rebuttal of criticism. They appreciate the purpose for which the Dhamma is taught, and they find that those Teachings, being rightly grasped by them, for a long time conduce to their welfare and happiness.<sup>1</sup>

## **BUDDHA'S HESITATION**

As the Buddha was enjoying the bliss of Awakening, just after his Enlightenment, it occurred to him:

“This Dhamma, won to by me is deep, difficult to understand, tranquil, excellent, beyond the dialectic, subtle, to be experienced by the wise each for himself. But this is a generation delighting in sensual pleasure, rejoicing in sensual pleasure. This is a matter difficult to see, that is to say, causal uprising by way of condition. This, too, is a matter difficult to see, the tranquilizing of all the activities [of mind and body], the renunciation of all attachment, the destruction of craving, the delusion of ‘selfhood,’ dispassion, stopping, and Nibbana. But if I were to teach this Dhamma to others, and they were not to understand me, that would be a weariness to me, that would be a vexation to me.

“This that through many toils I've won —  
Enough: why should I make it known?  
By folk with lust and hate consumed  
The Dhamma is not understood.  
Leading on against the stream [of mind];  
Deep, subtle, difficult to see, delicate,  
Unseen it will be by passion's slaves,  
Cloaked and obstructed in the murk of ignorance.

“In such wise as I was thus pondering. Monks, my mind inclined to inaction and not to teaching Dhamma. Then, monks, it occurred to Brahma Sahampati, who knew with his mind the reasoning in my mind: ‘Alas! The world is lost. Alas! The world is consumed by itself.’



“Then, monks, as a strong man might stretch out his bent arm, or might bend his outstretched arm, even so did Brahma Sahampati, vanishing from the Brahma world, become manifest before me. Then Brahma Sahampati, having arranged his upper robe over one shoulder and having saluted me with joined palms, spoke thus to me: ‘Lord, let the Awakened One teach the Dhamma, let the well-farer teach Dhamma; there are beings with little dust in their eyes who, not hearing this Dhamma, are decaying [in their own ignorance], but if they can hear and learn the Dhamma, they will grow.’ Thus spoke Brahma Sahampati to me, monks. Having said this, he further spoke thus:

‘There has appeared in this Magadha country  
An unclean Dhamma by minds with stains devised.  
Open this door of deathlessness [that you have discovered];  
Let them hear Dhamma awakened to by the Stainless One.  
As on a crag on the crest of mountain standing,  
A man might watch the people all around,  
Even so do Thou, O wisdom fair ascending.  
O Seer of all, from the terraced heights of Truth  
Look down, from grief release, upon people  
Sunken in grief, oppressed with birth and death.  
Arise, Thou hero! Conqueror in the battle! [against Mara],  
Thou leader of the caravan, without a doubt,  
Walk in the world.  
Let the Awakened One teach Dhamma.  
They who learn will grow and find Nibbana.’

“And then I, monks, having understood Brahma’s entreaty, out of compassion surveyed the world with the eye of an Awakened One. As I was surveying the world thus, with purified Deva-vision surpassing that of men, I saw beings with little dust in their eyes, with much dust in their eyes, with acute faculties, with dull faculties, of good dispositions, of bad dispositions, docile, intractable, and a few seeing danger in sins and the world beyond. Even as in a pond of blue lotuses or red lotuses, or in a pond of white lotuses or blue lotuses, they are born in the water do not rise above the water but thrive while altogether immersed; a few of these lotuses born in the water grow in the water and reach the surface of the

water; a few of them grow in the water and stand rising out of the water, undefiled by the water and mud; even so did I, monks, surveying the world with the eye of an Awakened One, saw beings with little dust in their eyes, and some with much dust in their eyes, with acute faculties [for learning and absorbing Dhamma] and with dull faculties [unable to comprehend], of good dispositions and of evil dispositions, docile, intractable, and a few seeing danger in sins and the world beyond. Then I, monks, addressed the Brahma Sahampati thus:

‘Opened for those who hear and who take to heart are the doors to the Deathless. Let them give forth their faith, for I will teach the Dhamma so sublime and excellent for men.’”<sup>ii</sup>

## **TEST FOR YOURSELF**

The Buddha did not want people to accept what he said on blind faith or trust. He urged his hearers to test and see for themselves, in themselves, the truth about what he taught concerning suffering, mental grief, sorrow, the impermanency of all conditioned things, and the soulless nature of the mind and body. The Buddha gave this discourse to the inhabitants of a certain district.

“It is proper for you, Kalamas, to doubt, to be uncertain; uncertainty has arisen in you about what is doubtful [concerning the Dhamma he taught]. Come, Kalamas, do not go upon what has been acquired by repeated hearing, nor upon tradition, nor upon rumor, nor upon what is in a scripture, nor upon surmise, nor upon an axiom, nor upon specious reasoning, nor upon a bias towards a notion that has been pondered over, nor upon another’s seeming ability, nor upon consideration. The monk is only the teacher. Kalamas, when you yourselves know these things are bad, these things are blameworthy, are censured by the wise and if undertaken and observed, these things lead to harm and ill, abandon them.

“What do you think, Kalamas? Does greed appear in a man when it does, for his benefit or harm? Does hatred, does delusion appear in a man, when it does, for his benefit or harm?”

“For his harm, venerable Sir.”

“Kalamas, being given to greed, being given to hate, being given to delusion, and being overwhelmed and vanquished mentally by greed, hatred, and delusion, people take the life of living creatures, they steal, commit adultery, and tell lies, and they prompt others to do likewise. Will that be long for their harm and ill?”

“Yes, venerable Sir.”

“Therefore, Kalamas, when you yourselves know: ‘These things are bad, are blameworthy, are censured by the wise, and if undertaken and observed, these things lead to harm and ill,’ abandon them.”

“What do you think, Kalamas? Does the absence of greed, hatred, and delusion, when these things are absent in a man, is it for his benefit or harm?”

“For his benefit, venerable Sir.”

“Kalamas, not being given and influenced by greed, hatred, and delusion, and not being overwhelmed and vanquished mentally by these, people do not take life, do not steal, nor commit adultery, nor tell lies, nor do they prompt others to do so. Will that be long for their benefit and happiness?”

“Yes, venerable Sir.”

“Therefore, indeed, do I say, Kalamas: Do not go upon what has been acquired by repeating learning, nor upon tradition or rumor, or what is in a scripture, nor upon surmise, or axiom, or specious reasoning, nor because the teachers say so. But, when you, Kalamas, know for yourselves from your own experience: ‘These things are good; these things are not blameworthy and are praised by the wise; and if undertaken and observed, these things lead to benefit, to happiness,’ enter on and abide in them.”<sup>iii</sup>

## VAKKALI

One time the Blessed One visited a certain sick monk, Vakkali, at his request. Now the Venerable Vakkali saw the Blessed One coming while he was yet far off and, seeing him, he stirred upon his bed. Then the Blessed One sat down and said to the Venerable Vakkali: “Well,

Vakkali, I hope you are bearing up. I hope you are enduring. Do your pains abate and not increase?”

“No, Lord, I am not bearing up. I am not enduring. Strong pains come upon me. They do not abate.”

The Buddha asked him: “Have you any doubt, Vakkali? Have you any remorse? Have you anything wherein to reproach yourself as to your morality?”

“Nay, Lord, I have no doubt, I have no remorse, and there is nothing wherein I might reproach myself as to morals.”

“Then, Vakkali, if that is so you must have some worry, you must have something that you regret.”

[The Buddha asked these questions because Vakkali asked the Buddha especially to come and see him, so the Buddha thought he had something important to see him about.]

“For a long time, Lord, I have been longing to see the Blessed One, but I had not strength enough in this body to come to see the Blessed One.”

The Buddha replied, “Enough, Vakkali! What is there in seeing this physical body of mine? He who sees the Dhamma [has experienced Nibbana], Vakkali, he in truth sees me. He who sees me, Vakkali, he sees the Dhamma. Verily, seeing the Dhamma, Vakkali, one sees me. Seeing me, one sees the Dhamma.”<sup>iv</sup>

This shows that until one has experienced the unborn, unconditioned state of Nibbana, he does not in truth “see” who the Buddha really is. The physical body of the Buddha was not really the Buddha but the unconditioned state of mind which pervaded his whole being. This is the true “Buddha” and Dhamma.

## **LAST INSTRUCTIONS**

When it came time for the Buddha’s final passing away, the extinction without remainder of his kammic force, never to be reborn again, the Awakened One exhorted his disciples in the following ways.

I have, monks, set forth the Teaching without making any distinction of esoteric and exoteric doctrine. There is nothing with regard to the Teachings that the Tathagata holds to the last with the closed fist of a teacher who keeps some things back.

I say to you that these Teachings of which I have direct knowledge and which I have made known to you, these you should thoroughly learn, cultivate, develop, and frequently practice, that the Life of Purity may be established and may long endure for the welfare and happiness of mankind, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit, well-being, and happiness of gods and men.

Therefore, be ye an island unto yourselves, a refuge unto yourselves, seeking no external refuge, with the Teaching as your island, the Teaching as your refuge, seeking no other refuge.

And how is one an island unto himself, a refuge unto himself, seeking no external refuge. with the Teaching as his island, his refuge, seeking no other refuge?

He dwells contemplating the body in the body, earnestly, clearly, comprehendingly, and mindfully, after having overcome desire and sorrow in regard to the world; he dwells contemplating feeling in the feelings, mind in the mind, and mental objects in the mental objects, earnestly, clearly comprehending and mindfully, after overcoming desire and sorrow in regard to the world. Then, truly, he is an island unto himself, a refuge unto himself, seeking no external refuge, having the Dhamma as his island and refuge, seeking no other refuge.

Those who now, or after I am gone, abide as an island unto themselves, as refuge unto themselves, having the Dhamma as their island and refuge, it is they who will become the highest [attain Nibbana] if they have the desire to learn.<sup>v</sup>

Just before the Blessed One's final passing he spoke to his faithful attendant, Ananda.

“I pray you, Ananda, prepare for me the couch between the twin Sal trees with the head to the north. I am weary and would fain lie down.”

“So be it, Lord.” And the Venerable Ananda did the Master's bidding.

Then the Blessed One laid himself down on his right side, in the lion's posture, resting one foot upon the other, and so disposed himself, mindfully and clearly comprehending.

At that time the twin Sal trees broke out in full bloom, yet it was not the season for flowering, and the blossoms rained upon the body of the Tathagata and dropped and scattered and were strewn upon it, in worship of the Awakened One.

And the Blessed One spoke to the venerable Ananda, saying: "In full bloom, Ananda, are the twin Sal trees, yet it is not the season of flowering. And the blossoms rain upon the body of the Tathagata and drop and scatter and are strewn upon it, in worship of the Tathagata. And celestial coral flowers and heavenly sandalwood powder from the sky rain down and drop and are strewn upon the body of the Tathagata, in worship of the Tathagata. And the sound of heavenly voices and heavenly instruments makes music in the air, out of reverence for the Tathagata.

Yet not thus, Ananda, is the Tathagata respected, venerated, esteemed, worshipped, and honored in the highest degree. But, Ananda, whatsoever monk or layman or laywoman abides by the Teaching, lives uprightly in the Teaching, walks in the way of the Teaching, it is by him that the Tathagata, is respected, venerated, esteemed, worshipped, and honored in the highest degree. Therefore, Ananda, abide by the Teaching, live uprightly in the Teaching, walk in the way of the Teaching, thus you should train yourselves."

And then the Blessed One addressed the monks, saying: "Behold now, I exhort you: Impermanent are all compounded things! Work out your salvation with earnestness."

This was the last word of the Tathagata.<sup>vi</sup>

On all the pictures and statues of the Compassionate Lord, can be detected a slight, sublime smile. The following is a delightful verse describing it.

"What hast Thou seen  
That brings Thee such a serene calm?"

What is Thy secret  
Why dost Thou smile, sweet Master?  
That light Thy countenance?  
The world has known the Doctrine  
Twice a thousand years — and five hundred more —  
And yet the world knows not  
The meaning of the cloudless smile.  
The features, all unruffled and alight,  
Must veil a mind of untold depths.  
And yet, and yet, I wish  
We understood the meaning of  
The inscrutable smile!”



“The Buddha smiles, my son, because He knows  
The end of toilsome round, and all life’s woes  
What’s won is won nor ever lost again;  
Its fruit is sure — beyond this present pain.  
The goal is sure for you, that’s won by me.  
’Tis this that lends to Buddha’s serenity.”<sup>vii</sup>

## **THE NOBLE EIGHTFOLD PATH IN PRACTICE**

In the foregoing sections the different areas of Buddhist thought, their functions and purposes, and the different areas of development to be cultivated, have been laid out in detail. In the following section, in the Buddha’s own words, a complete account is given of how a person comes to be born into this world of human beings, thus obtaining the rare opportunity of human birth. He explains how one grows up in the world and experiences the rise and fall of life, and then decides to leave the worldly life of sensuous desire and ego-gratification. The changed man then takes up the task of disentangling his mind from the world and starting on the road to spiritual Awakening.

Monks, it is on the conjunction of three things that there is conception. If there is a coitus of the parents, but it is not the mother’s season and the

gandhabba [the re-linking consciousness of the kammic force] is not present — for so long conception will not take place. If there is a coitus of the parents and it is the mother's season, but the gandhabba is not present — then also there is no conception. But if, monks, there is a coitus of the parents, and it is the mother's season, and the gandhabba is present, it is on the conjunction of these three things that there is conception. Monks, the mother for nine or ten months carries the fetus in her womb with great anxiety for her heavy burden. At the end of nine or ten months the mother gives birth. When it is born, she feeds it with her own life-blood [mother's milk]. Then, monks, when that boy has grown and has developed his sense organs, he plays at those games for little boys. He plays with a toy plough, a red wagon, a stick horse, he plays at turning somersaults, hide-and-seek and so forth. Then when that young boy has grown into maturity and has developed his sense organs, he enjoys himself endowed with and possessed of the five strands of sense pleasure: material shapes cognizable through the eye . . . sounds cognizable through the ear . . . scents through the nose . . . tastes through the tongue . . . touches by the body, which are delightful, pleasant, liked, enticing, alluring, connected with sense pleasures.

When he has seen a material shape through the eye, or heard sound through the ear . . . and so on, he feels attraction for these agreeable things, or he feels repugnance and aversion for the disagreeable things; and he dwells without mindfulness aroused as to the body, with a mind limited [blinded by ignorance and craving]; and he does not comprehend that freedom of mind [of the four meditative absorptions], or that freedom through intuitive wisdom whereby those evil, unskilled states of his would have been stopped without remainder. Therefore, possessed by compliance and antipathy [giving in to his feelings, without self-control], whatever feeling he feels — pleasant, painful, or neutral — he delights in that feeling [of desire or aversion], he welcomes it [reacts aggressively], and persists in clinging to it. Thus from his attachment and desire for those feelings, from his persistence to reacting to them, delight arises. Whatever is delight amid those feelings, there is craving, there is grasping after them. Conditioned by grasping is becoming; conditioned by becoming is rebirth, and conditioned by birth comes age,



sickness, misfortune, suffering, lamentation, grief, despair, and death. Such is the arising of this entire mass of ill.<sup>viii</sup>

Through many a long, weary day of experiencing the rise and fall of, first, happiness, then sorrow and misfortune, again a short satisfaction, then again mental worry and grief, and then again a little fortune, only to lose it and fall into confusion, bewilderment, dejection, and despair, [a] man finally comes to the end of his wits.

He thinks to himself, “I am beset by birth, aging, sickness, pain, by mental suffering, sorrow, grief, worry, confusion, dejection, and despair, and I cannot escape death, I cannot avoid it. Maybe an end or an alleviation of all this mass of ill can be shown”.



Then a Tathagata arises in the world, a Perfected One, a fully Self-Awakened One, endowed with right knowledge and conduct, a well farer, a knower of worlds, the matchless charioteer of men to be tamed, the Blessed One, the Buddha. He makes known this world with its gods, with Mara, with Brahma, with its recluses and monks, with its animals and men, having realized all of this by his own super-knowledge. He teaches Dhamma which is lovely at the beginning, lovely in the middle, and lovely at the end [Arahatship], complete in its detail with the spirit and the letter. He proclaims the Holy Life wholly fulfilled, quite purified.

Then this householder, or his son, hears these Teachings of Dhamma, he hears the Good Law. After hearing this Dhamma he is stirred and he is filled with faith and confidence in the Tathagata and the Dhamma he teaches.

Thus endowed with this faith, he thinks. “This household life is confined, unstable, beset with problems, full of hindrances. But going forth to the homeless life [of a monk] is free, in the open. Not easy is it for one who lives in a house to live the Holy Life, wholly fulfilled, and wholly pure in all its aspects.

Suppose now that I, having cut off my hair and beard, having put on the yellow robe, should go forth from the household life and lead the life

of a homeless one, giving up attachments and entanglements to the world?

Then in a short time, having given up his possessions great or small, having said good-bye to his relations and friends, having cut off his hair and beard [as a symbol of detachment from the world], having donned the yellow robe, that good man does indeed go forth from home life into homelessness.

### **MORALITY**

Having thus left the world, he observes and fulfills the way of conduct, the way of training, the way of living which is befitting of one who has thus gone forth. He abandons the onslaught on creatures, he avoids killing or harming living things, he abstains from it. Laying down the stick and sword, he lives kindly and full of compassion, scrupulous and friendly towards all breathing things. He is desirous for the welfare of all living objects. He avoids stealing and abstains from taking what is not given to him. He lives with a heart honest and pure. He avoids unchastity, living aloof from the habit of sexual intercourse. He avoids lying speech and abstains from it, he speaks the truth, and he is devoted to the truth. He is reliable, worthy of confidence, no deceiver of men. He avoids tale-bearing, and what he has heard here he does not repeat there so as to cause dissention there. What he has heard there he does not repeat here so as to cause dissention here. He unites those that are divided, and those that are united he encourages; concord gladdens him, he delights in concord, and it is concord that he spreads by his word.

He avoids harsh language. He speaks such words as are gentle, courteous, friendly, and agreeable to many, such words as go to the heart. He avoids vain, frivolous talk and abstains from it. He speaks at the right time, in accordance with fact, speaks what is useful, and speaks about the Dhamma and the discipline. His speech is like a treasure, uttered at the right moment, accompanied by arguments, moderate and full of sense.

He takes food only at one time of the day, before noon; he abstains from eating at night [out of greed for food]. He does not take his food for sport or intoxication or adornment, but thoughtfully and prudently

does he take his food with the thought: “I take this food sufficient for the support and upkeep of the body, to allay its pains, to help the practice of the Holy Life, so I shall live at ease.” Just as a man anoints a wound just for the healing of it, or just as he oils an axle enough for carrying the load: even so, thoughtfully and prudently does a monk take his food. He keeps aloof from dance, song, music, merry-making, and visiting unseemly shows. He does not adorn himself with flowers, perfumes, ointments, and other kinds of adornment and embellishment. High and gorgeous beds and chairs he does not use. Gold and silver he does not accept; he has no dealings in money and business. He does not run errands or do the menial duties of a messenger. He eschews the buying and selling of things. He has nothing to do with false weights and measures, metals, gems, etc. He avoids the crooked ways of bribery, deception and fraud. He has no part in stabbing, beating, chaining, attacking, plundering, and oppressing.

He is contented with only the robe that protects his body from the elements of nature, and with the alms bowl by means of which he collects his food to keep himself alive. Wherever he goes he is provided with these two things. Just as a winged bird in flying carries its wings along with it, so does a monk carry his robe and bowl. By fulfilling this noble domain of morality [virtue] he feels in his heart an irreproachable happiness. But with this success in moral habit he is not satisfied: He knows his purpose is not yet fulfilled, so he proceeds further in his practice.

### **CONTROL OF THE SENSES**



In perceiving a form with the eye, a sound with the ear, a smell with the nose, a taste with the tongue, a touch object with the body, or a mental object with the mind, he is not misled or attracted by its outer view or its lesser details, but he sees it as it really is, so that coveting and dejection do not overspread his heart. He wards off that which, should he be unguarded in his senses, might give rise to evil, unprofitable states.

He watches over his senses, keeps his senses under control, he practices for their restraint, their taming, and for their calming [the

quelling of desire and lust]. By practicing the noble control of the senses he feels in his heart an unblemished happiness. But even by this happiness, gained by his success in subduing his senses, he is not satisfied: He knows his purpose is not yet fulfilled, so he proceeds further in his practice, not content with moral habit and self restraint.

### **MINDFULNESS**

He is mindful, and acts with clear comprehension when going and coming, when looking forward and backward, when bending and stretching his limbs, when wearing his robes and carrying the alms bowl, when eating, drinking, chewing, and tasting, when obeying the call of nature, when walking, standing, sitting, falling asleep, and waking, when speaking, and keeping silent.

Now, being equipped with the lofty morality, equipped with this noble control of the senses, and filled with the noble mindfulness and clear comprehension, he chooses a secluded dwelling in the forest at the foot of a tree, on a mountain top, in a rock cave, on a burial ground, in the open air, or on a heap of straw: Having returned from his alms round after the meal, he seats himself cross-legged, with body erect, with mindfulness fixed before him.

### **ELIMINATING THE FIVE HINDRANCES**

Putting away the covetousness for the world, he remains with a heart freed from covetousness and he purifies his mind of lusts. He casts away ill will; he dwells with a heart free from ill will; cherishing love and compassion toward all living things, he cleanses his heart of ill will. He casts away sloth and torpor; he dwells free from drowsiness and dullness; perceiving the light, with watchful mind, with clear comprehension, he cleanses his mind from sloth and torpor. He casts away restlessness and worry, dwelling with mind undisturbed. Full of peace, he cleanses his mind of restlessness and worry. He has cast away doubt, dwelling free from doubt, full of confidence in the Good, he cleanses his heart of doubt.

So long as these five hindrances are not cast away from his heart he looks upon himself as in debt, diseased, in prison, in slavery, lost on a

desert road. But when these five hindrances have been cast aside within him he looks upon himself as freed from debt, rid of disease, out of jail, a man free and secure.

### **MEDITATIVE ABSORPTIONS**

And gladness springs up within him on his realizing that, and joy arises to him thus gladdened, and, so rejoicing, all his frame becomes at ease, and being thus at ease he feels happy, and a happy mind finds concentration.

And he lets his mind pervade one quarter of the world with thoughts of love, and so the second quarter and the third quarter, and so the fourth. And thus the whole world, above, below, around, and everywhere does he continue to pervade with a heart full of loving kindness, far reaching, grown great and beyond measure.

He does likewise with thoughts and feelings of compassion . . . sympathetic joy, and equanimity . . . above, below, around and everywhere does he continue to pervade, far reaching, grown great, and beyond measure. He enters into, and abides in, the first meditative absorption . . . the second meditative absorption . . . the third meditative absorption . . . the fourth meditative absorption, which is entirely purified by equanimity and mindfulness.

Thus with the mind composed, quite purified, quite clarified, without blemish, without defilement, grown soft and workable, fixed, immovable, he directs his mind to the knowledge and recollection of former lives . . . he develops the divine eye and directs his mind to the knowledge of the passing hence and the arising of beings according to their Kamma. But [in spite] of his success in concentration he is yet not satisfied, his purpose is not yet fulfilled.

### **INSIGHT**

After coming out of the meditative absorptions the noble disciple turns his mind to the development of insight. Whatever there is of materiality, feeling, perception, mental activities, and consciousness, all these phenomena he regards as impermanent subject to suffering, as infirm, an ulcer, a thorn, as misery. He turns away from these things; he directs his

mind to the destruction of cankers. He understands as it really is: This is suffering; this is the arising of suffering; this is the cessation of suffering; and this is the way leading to the cessation of suffering. He understands as it really is: These are the cankers; this is the arising of cankers; this is the cessation of the cankers; and this is the Way leading to the destruction of the cankers. Knowing this, seeing this, he frees his mind from the canker of sense pleasures; he frees his mind from the canker of becoming; he frees his mind from the canker of ignorance. In this freedom he directs his mind towards the Deathless, Nibbana, thus: “This, truly, is the Highest Peace, namely the end of all kammic activity, the forsaking of every substratum of rebirth, the extinction of craving, detachment, Nibbana.” The knowledge comes to him: “I am freed;” and he comprehends: Exhausted is future rebirth, fulfilled is the Holy Life, done is what was to be done; there is nothing left to become this or that.<sup>ix</sup>

## THE TRUE GOAL

Hence, the purpose of the Holy Life does not consist in acquiring alms, honor, or fame, not in gaining morality, concentration, or the eye of knowledge. *That unshakable deliverance of the heart — that, indeed, is the goal of living the Holy Life, that is its essence, the pith, that is its end.*

It is like a man going to the forest with an ax, looking for, aiming at pith, seeking for the pith of a great stable and pithy tree. He passes by the softwood; he passes by the bark, passes by the shoots, and passes by the branches and foliage. He cuts out the pith of that great and stable, pithy tree, knowing it to be the pith. He is not fooled or satisfied with the outer coverings, and goes away, taking the pith with him. So he will get the good that can be done by the pith because it is the pith.<sup>x</sup>

These things — faith, perfection of moral habit, fulfilling the rules of conduct, self control and sensory restraint, concentration, mental purifications, overcoming doubt, knowledge and vision of the true way — are not the true essence of the Holy Life. However, without perfecting these

things the destruction of the ten fetters and the attainment of Arahantship cannot be achieved.

The following is a sutta involving two of the Buddha's disciples concerning the various aspects of training needed to arrive at the realization of Truth, to experience Nibbana, which is given in a simile of a relay of chariots used to get to one's destination.

“Your Reverence, why is the Holy Life lived under the Lord?”

“The Holy Life under the Lord, your Reverence, is lived for utter Nibbana without attachment.”

“Sir, is purity of moral habit utter Nibbana without attachment?”

“No, it is not this, your Reverence.”

“Then, Sir, is not purity of mind, utter Nibbana without attachment?”

“It is not this, your Reverence.”

“Then is purity of view — purity through crossing over doubt — utter Nibbana without attachment?”

“It is not this, your Reverence.”

“Then, Sir, is purity of knowledge and insight into the Way and what is not the Way — or purity of knowledge and insight into the Path — utter Nibbana without attachment?”

It is not this, your Reverence”

“Then, Sir, is purity arising from knowledge and insight utter Nibbana without attachment?”

“It is not this, your Reverence.”

“Then, Sir, what is utter Nibbana without attachment, except these states?”

“It is not this, your Reverence.”

“But, Sir, when you are asked: ‘Is purity of moral habit . . . purity arising from knowledge and insight, utter Nibbana without attachment?’ you say: ‘It is not this, your Reverence.’ And when asked: ‘What is utter Nibbana without attachment, except these states?’ you say: ‘It is not this, your Reverence.’ Venerable Sir, the meaning of what has been said, please tell me.”

“I will make you a parable, for by a parable well informed men understand the meaning of what is said.

‘Your Reverence, it is as if the King of Kosala were studying in Savatthi [a town in north India], and something to be done urgently should arise in Saketa [a hundred miles from Savatthi]. Then chariots would be arranged for him between Savatthi and Saketa, being used in a relay. Then, having left Savatthi by the palace gate, the King of Kosala might mount the first chariot in the relay, and by means of the first chariot in the relay he would reach the second chariot in the relay. He would then dismiss the first chariot and mount the second chariot, and by means of this second chariot in the relay he would proceed and reach the third chariot in the relay . . . the fourth . . . the fifth . . . the sixth . . . and would mount the seventh chariot in the relay, and by means of the seventh chariot in the relay he would reach the palace gate at his destination, Saketa.

“Even so, in the same way, your Reverence, purity of moral habit is of purpose in order to arrive at purity of mind; purity of mind is of purpose in order to cross over doubt and uncertainty; purity by crossing over doubt is of purpose to gain knowledge and insight into the Way and what is not the Way. This is of purpose in order to arrive at knowledge and insight into the Path; the purity arising from knowledge and insight into the Path is of purpose to realize the purity arising from knowledge and insight [to realize Nibbana for the first time]; and the purity [the realizing Nibbana] arising from knowledge and insight is of purpose to carry one to the final utter Nibbana without attachment [Arahatship].

“It is wonderful, Sir, it is marvelous, Sir, that the very deep questions were explained step by step by an instructed disciple who knows the Teacher’s instructions properly.”<sup>xi</sup>

The practice of Dhamma and “living the life of meditation” is not an end in itself, it is only the means for crossing over the great ocean of Samsara, the incessant rounds of birth and death, sorrow, suffering, lamentation, grief, and despair. Once this crossing over has been fully effected, on attainment of Arahatship, only then can the diligent effort of practicing the



Dhamma be abandoned. This is illustrated in the Simile of the Raft, an allegory the Buddha told to his disciples.

Suppose, monks, there are the following conditions confronting a man. A man going on his way happens upon a pit containing four venomous snakes of fierce heat but, being fond of his life, fond of happiness and loathing pain, he quickly wanders away from that pit of poisonous snakes. Then he is told that there are five murderous foes following close upon his heels wishing to slay him. As he goes further he is told there is a sixth murderous housebreaker with lifted sword who is close behind him wishing to cut off his head. Fearing those murderous foes he wanders into an empty village. Each house he enters, he finds it deserted and empty. Then he is told that there are village plunderers who are coming to plunder this deserted village. So, fearing that also, he roams here and there, whereby coming to a broad river, the further side being safe and secure from the dangers beset on this side. But there is no boat wherein to cross, nor any bridge for going back and forth. Then he thinks “How now shall it [go with me if] I gather grass, sticks, branches and logs, and bind them together to make a raft, then mount the raft and strive with hands and feet to cross to safety to the other side, being free from all those dangers which beset me on this side.”

And suppose he does so, and, having crossed over, gone beyond, he stands on dry ground, safe and secure. Then he thinks, “This raft has been very helpful to me since by its means I got safely across. But now, being safely across, suppose I haul it up on dry ground or set it adrift on the water, rather than carry it with me, and then go where I will.” And then he does just that: he leaves it and goes about his business, free and safe.

Now, monks, this simile I have made to illustrate the meaning, and the interpretation of it is thus:

The four snakes of fierce heat and poisonous venom is a name for the four great elements of earth, water, fire and air.

The five murderous foes is a name for the five groups of grasping: form, feeling, perception, mental formations, and consciousness.

The sixth murderous housebreaker with uplifted sword is a name for passionate desire and craving

The empty village is a name describing the personal internal six-fold bases of sense. For if a man searches it through entirely by way of the senses, he finds it empty, void, unoccupied by anything of a nature of ‘I’ or ‘mine’ or a ‘Soul.’

‘Village plunderers’ describe the sense objects which invade and harass the mind.

The broad river is a term for the four-fold flood of sense desire, becoming, clinging to erroneous views and theories [about the origin of life, existence, etc.] and ignorance.

This side [beset with danger and fear] is a term for the person-pack the five-fold mass of body and mind.

The further shore, safe and secure from danger and fear [free from attachment and bondage to the five aggregates], that is a name for Nibbana, Arahathship.

The raft is a name for the Noble Eightfold Path, which is used to cross safely to the further shore.

‘Striving with hands and feet,’ that is a term for energy and right effort.

‘Crossed over, gone beyond, he stands on dry ground safe and secure,’ that is a name describing an Arahath who is safe from all bonds, never to be reborn in the conditioned world.

‘He lets go of the raft, he does not cling to it and take it with him,’ this means he lets go of his clinging even to the diligent application of all the fundamental practices of the Dhamma because the Arahath no longer is in need of it.

So I have shown you, monks, how the Dhamma resembles a raft in being for the purpose of crossing over, not for grasping. Monks, when you know the Simile of the Raft, then even you know that the Good Teachings should be abandoned by you, [when the end has been reached], therefore, how much more so for those untrue teachings.<sup>xii</sup>

This concludes the exposition of the Buddha’s Teachings given herein. The Suttas selected are those which have been of the most help and inspiration to the author in studying, practicing, and applying the Awakened One’s “Dhamma medicine.” They cover most of the essential aspects of the *Buddha-Dhamma*. The Buddha was teaching to a wide variety of people in

those days, and he modified or adapted his teaching approach to fit the temperament of his particular listeners, in groups or individually, so that they might easily and quickly learn the essence of the Dhamma, and then get on with it.

I encourage the reader, if he is interested in this, to read further the complete collection of the Buddha's discourses, as they are an endless source of wisdom, inspiration, and guidance. These may be obtained from the Pali Text Society, London, or from the Buddhist Publications Society, Kandy, Sri Lanka.

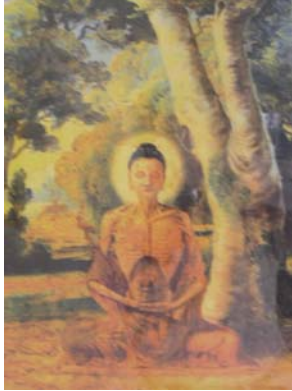


**THE WAY TO PEACE AND HAPPINESS**  
**Chapter VII: Using the Dhamma Wisely**



## APPENDIX MEDITATION

**W**hat has been given in the material presented thus far is primarily an intense study of the general teachings of the Buddha. In the section on the Four Foundations of Mindfulness it was stated that this is the sure way for the overcoming of suffering and the attainment of Nibbana. The *Satipatthana Sutta* describes in general the way the body and mind should be contemplated, and that is incorporated into the systematic practice of Vipassana meditation, which will now be discussed.



The word ‘vipassana’ consists of the word ‘passana,’ meaning to see, and the prefix ‘vi,’ meaning to divide or separate. Basically it means to see clearly and separately the mental processes occurring in each moment of sensory experience so that the true nature of the mind is understood; to see reality as it is.

The application, or direction of thought, in the system of Vipassana, or insight meditation, aims to bring about the purification of those mental conditions which cause pain and confusion. But in order to accomplish this, those ill conditions must first be brought into the light of discriminating awareness, to be seen and understood. Therefore, *seeing and understanding the mind is of primary importance.*

At first, however, the gross disturbances of the mind need to be calmed. The mind in its normal thinking and grasping can be likened to a tidal pool at the beach: during high tide, when the surf is washing over it, nothing can be seen clearly. But at low tide, when the surf is not reaching the tide pool, then the water becomes very calm and clear. You can see to the bottom and see all the different forms of plants, sea creatures, stones, and so forth, and

their movements. The mind needs to be brought to a state like that, where it can begin to perceive its own activities objectively.

When the mind is calmed, even just a little, then awareness is tuned to perceiving the flux of mind and body during the processes of sensory contact, feeling, thought formation, emotional reactions and possible body movements arising from the mental activity. All of that is observed without personal involvement, attachment, or identification. It is possible to do that. One can view the processes in their various changing manifestations as just an impermanent, fleeting, but consecutive series of conditioned phenomena operating without any individual entity which directs or who owns those occurrences.

By detaching the mind from all of the sensory impingements and undermining with “insight-wisdom” the delusive notion of a separate “I” which is experiencing, the mind gradually stops reacting to, or even paying attention to, sense stimuli. The “I” feeling fades away and a state of undifferentiating, all-embracing, self-less awareness is experienced.

This direct, intimate experience of the mind’s uninfluenced, original nature is intuitive proof that what is thought of as being an individual self that experiences the world is merely a deeply ingrained, illusive, reflexive notion. In reality there are only conditioned mental and material activities arising and passing away according to the law of cause and effect, devoid of an inherent soul or governing agent. These activities are the source from which arises this whole complex thing called ‘life,’ with all its trials and tribulations.

Now one might ask, “What good is there in acquiring this view?” The answer is that one who adopts this vision of life gains a powerful motive for actually starting the process of disentanglement from the miseries and frustrations of life and can begin to eliminate many of one’s worries, anxieties, fears, self-wrought pain, and discomfort. The meditator will stop doing all the unnecessary things which only add to the involvement and bondage of his body and mind because he will understand how his actions



contribute to them. Those present actions are based on previous actions, while future results and actions will be conditioned by the habits he is now cultivating. By eliminating unwholesome, selfish, greedy, and unnecessary thoughts and actions he will be paving the way for a calmer, smoother flowing life in the future. That is accomplished by practicing the Noble Eightfold Path taught by the Awakened One for that very purpose. The task must be taken up by each person for himself.

**I**t's by oneself that evil deeds are done,  
One makes oneself corrupt;  
By oneself is evil left undone,  
It's by oneself that one is purified,  
Purity and impurity depend on oneself,  
No one can others purify.<sup>i</sup>

**A**ll conditions proceed from the mind,  
The mind is their source, they are mind-made;  
If one acts or speaks with an impure mind,  
Ill effects will follow, just as the wheel of the cart  
Follows the hoof of the ox that pulls it.  
And if one acts or speaks with a pure mind,  
Then happiness and ease follow that person,  
Just as his shadow that never leaves him.<sup>ii</sup>

**L**ittle by little, one by one, as time goes by,  
Gradually let the wise in his mind  
Remove his own impurities,  
Just as the smith blows away  
The blemishes in gold which mar its purity.<sup>iii</sup>

As all this points out, it is up to each person to begin the process of disentangling and freeing his mind from the bondage of his past thoughts and actions. And this can only be started and successfully completed when

one has the proper, detached attitude towards the body, the mind, and the external world.

## **SENSORY COGNITION**

Because of the complexities involved, we would do well to pause here and give special consideration to the ways in which moment-to-moment sense experiences function through the five aggregates of clinging.

When a sense stimulus comes into contact with, and impinges upon, one of the sense organs, that is called “the arising of form” (matter, shape, materiality; in Pali, *rupa*). At that same instant feeling, perception, emotional reactions, and consciousness of the sense stimulus also arise. That is called “the arising of name” (mind, mentality; in Pali, *nama*). The two — name and form — arise more or less simultaneously, and that is appropriately called “the process of *nama-rupa* (name-and-form, or mind-and-matter)”. The mind — consciousness, perception, feeling, and emotions — identifies the object which has impinged upon the sense organ. These arise from the unconscious life-stream (*bhavangasota*) according to how one is conditioned to react to each individual stimulus.

Reaction is based on the law of cause and effect (karma or kamma). Our reaction to each stimulus is remembered and recorded in the subconscious mind, as though in an electromagnetic memory bank. Those reactions are rapidly integrated into the life-continuum, creating a response pattern which is utilized each time a similar stimulus of the same intensity contacts the sense organ. Note that it is not the physical object itself to which the mind reacts, but rather a predetermined response pattern.

In sensory experiences concepts continue to play their role even after the objects have disappeared from the scene. For example, ‘I see a coin’ involves the coin which is an object of form external to me. But, when there is contact, what gets directly involved is not the material structure of the coin as such. It is the perception or concept (a mental picture of the coin) which is again recreated each time a ‘coin’ is perceived. The mind assumes



the form of the object presented and this form is termed a perception or concept. This is a mental counterpart of the object actually contacted. The object, however, is not cognized as a mental image, but it appears as extended in space and time as a concrete object.

In the foregoing example, the real support for consciousness is not the coin, pure and simple. The “matter” of the coin being what it is (a visible vibration), the grasping groups of feeling, perception, mental formations, and consciousness take over from there and build up a whole host of processes, investing the original stimulus with feeling, desire, stability, possessive claim, and so forth.<sup>iv</sup>

Do not misunderstand, the object does exist [as some kind of energy vibration — color, sound, odor, etc.]<sup>v</sup> for it is a presentation to the subject [consciousness]. Yet it is private: its existence [the way it is perceived in our mind] is not shared by others. It is constructed by the individual and remains for him alone.<sup>vi</sup>

The same kind of process happens in everyone’s mind, so it seems that everyone sees the same things. The way the mind feels and perceives different stimuli is conditioned by past experiences and conditioning. Each human mind is conditioned to perceive the same things in more or less the same way.



The concepts and reactions that we are continually reconstructing within our mental make-up are the most potent obstructions to perceiving things in their true impermanent, conditioned, and soulless nature. In fact, once a concept is formed, thinking appears to proceed no further in that direction. Concepts take the thinker further away from actuality by fixing forces and events as permanent, concrete entities. These conceptual deposits in our life-stream (*bhavangasota*) continue to influence (if left unchecked) all our behavior, judgments, and sentiments relative to subsequent experiences, enhancing or diminishing their quality. Knowledge is nothing more than

accumulated concepts, and in conceptual thinking logic, reason, imagination, and living experience play different roles.<sup>vii</sup>

Understanding this process involved in every act of sensory perception is very important in order to help one see and realize the extent of the mind's entanglements with things of the world, but an entanglement actually occurring only within the mind itself.

While sitting quietly with a calm, clear awareness in meditation, all these vibrations, feelings, perceptions, thoughts, ideas, and such, come flashing through the senses, rousing up consciousness. They seem to spring up from out of the void and to have no real relationship to us. They are only a whirlwind of feelings and mental pictures with no substantiality, yet we build all our thoughts and actions on them. Our whole objectified world of experience arises accordingly. Hence is the saying: "all things come from the mind, they are mind-made." It all depends on the contact between the six organs of sense and their corresponding objects, which include thoughts and ideas, imagination, and the rest.



The incoming sensations, or vibrations, we receive through the senses arise and dissolve in one "mind-moment" If we do not react to take further action (grasping and clinging) to them they will vanish instantly back into the void of mind from whence they arose. If we grasp or cling (mentally), ponder and think about, and automatically react to the objects they represent, then the objects and the feelings, perceptions, and thoughts about them seem to be real and to be something permanent, substantial, and important to us. If they persist they can also agitate or cause mental unrest or negative thoughts and cause us to do some action or think about something else. This sets off a long chain of reactions, allowing the "activities of the self" (*sankhara khandha*) or past conditioning to manifest, causing a complete re-routing of our thought pattern about what is happening "here and now."

Feelings, such as the sensations of aches or pains, seem to continue unchanged for one, five, ten, or thirty seconds or more.

However, in reality every instant (mind-moment) they are continually arising and passing away, each one conditioning another to arise, followed by another, instantaneously, consecutively, in quick succession. To normal perceiving consciousness it gives the illusion of one long, enduring feeling. In the movement of a step or swing of an arm, each instant contains a different, separate command from the mind to that body part, causing it to move. Each minute movement produces a different sensation, cognized by the body consciousness. That, in turn, conditions the arising of the next thought, or directive, to keep moving the arm or leg, as the case may be. It is a rapid, consecutive series of movements and sensations which follow each other so quickly that, if not examined closely and slowly, they give the illusion of being one long, continuous movement. It is similar to the working of a motion picture, which is made up of many individual, separate frames, each representing a single phase of action. When these frames are run rapidly through the film projector, it gives the appearance on the screen of an uninterrupted, flowing scene.

Just as the flame that now is, is not the same flame that was a moment ago, nor yet something apart from that flame, but is the result of the growth of that flame, so is it with the five grasping groups. As the flame burns by laying hold of new fuel ever and again, so is the life process constantly arising ever and again, laying hold of objects by nature of habit tendencies that lie within the process of grasping.<sup>viii</sup>

Vipassana meditation is the process of becoming aware of, and observing, the mental processes involved in sensory perception, which is normally an unconscious activity insomuch as one is not aware of it. Meditation, then, is the process of making the unconscious activity of the mind a conscious activity. In this way all delusions concerning the nature of the mind are removed and the truth perceived and realized.

In one's meditation practice sufficient time should be given to perceiving this moment-to-moment sequence of arising vanishing mind-moments. This is needed until the perception of it is clear and confirmed in the meditator's mind and the nature of it known. The facts of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, and non-self in all feelings, perceptions, mental tendencies, and consciousness will be very evident. It is difficult to understand by only reading or theorizing, but with a little guidance, steady practice, and a quiet, watchful mind, it can be all seen fairly clearly.

Develop concentration, monks. He who is concentrated understands according to actuality. And what does he understand according to actuality? The origin and extinction of form, the origin and extinction of feelings, perceptions, mental tendencies, and the origin and extinction of consciousness.<sup>ix</sup>

The illusive feeling and idea of there being a separate individual "I" or "self" has attached itself like a parasite to the arising five-fold mass of phenomena (consciousness). It is this aroma of "I" which we must endeavor to understand and undermine to purify the mind of the ego-centered ownership idea. This is because the "self-cherishing I" prevents a person from being able to experience one-pointed concentration or higher states of awareness. The "I" reflex notion as subject will not allow the mind to let go itself in order to experience oneness or non-duality. The "I" keeps the mind bound in dual relationships.

The perceiving of impermanence and soulless-ness in the five groups of grasping, if practiced and enlarged, wears out all sensual passion, wears out all passion for material existence and rebirth, wears out and abolishes all conceit of "I am."

Just as in the autumn, a farmer, plowing with a plough, cuts through all the spreading roots as he ploughs, in the same way, monks, the perceiving of the impermanence and soulless-ness in the five grasping groups, developed and frequently practiced, destroys all sensual passion, destroys and abolishes all conceit of "I am."<sup>x</sup>

The objective in Buddhist meditation is to remove this “I” as the subject in order to genuinely transcend all subject-object relationships — even itself as subject. In this way one will truly realize that the five aggregates of phenomena are in reality not our “self,” and that there is no experiencer behind the experience. There are only conditioned reflexive phenomena rolling on and on. Thus one will be able to free consciousness from its bondage to the body and mind and to experience the ultimate release and bliss of Nibbana.

Monks, so long as I did not fully understand these five grasping groups, the arising of these five groups, their ceasing and the way leading to their ceasing — just so long was I not assured that in this world with its devas, its Maras, its Brahmans, men and animals, that I was fully Enlightened. But as soon as I did fully understand them as they really are . . . then I was assured that in this world I was fully Enlightened.<sup>xi</sup>

### **WHAT IS MOHA (IGNORANCE)?<sup>xii</sup>**

In order to understand the characteristic of *moha* we should know what we are ignorant or unaware of when there is *moha*. There is the world of conventional terms expressed as words and ideas, and there is the world of *paramattha dhammas* (absolute realities — things which are actually real in our experience before conceptualizing and proliferating thought has distorted their true nature). When we think of the world we may think of people, animals, houses, cars, trees, and so forth, and give them different names. However, do we know them as they really are, as they are initially experienced through our senses, as being only elements of characteristics of material phenomena (*rupa*) and mental phenomena (*nama*) which arise and pass away in our body and mind?

The material and mental phenomena which appear in our daily lives can be directly experienced through the five physical sense-doors and through the mind-door, no matter how we name them or organize them for our own

use. That is the world which is real, the world of conditioned realities as they are initially encountered through the senses.

The Buddha has explained this “world of conditioned realities” which he calls “The All”:

Monks, I will teach you *the all*. Do you listen to it.

Now what, brethren, is the all? It is eye and object, ear and sound, nose and scent, tongue and savor, body and things tangible, mind and mind-states. That, brethren, is called “the All.”

Whoso, brethren, should say: “Rejecting this all, I will proclaim another all,” it would be mere talk on his part, and when questioned he could not make good his boast, and further would come to an ill pass. Why so? Because, brethren, it would be beyond his scope to do so.<sup>xiii</sup>

The world, in the sense of absolute realities, is called “*the World*” in the Buddha’s Teaching. Those who develop the Teachings of the Buddha, the Awakened One, develop the wisdom which sees things as they really are before the mind interferes with them. They truly know “*the World*.”

One of the Buddha’s disciples said to the Buddha:

“‘The world! The world!’ is the saying, Lord. Pray, how far, Lord, does this saying go?”

“What is transitory by nature, Ananda, is called ‘*the world*’ in the Ariyan discipline [the Buddha’s Teachings]. And what, Ananda, is transitory by nature? The eye, Ananda, is transitory by nature? The eye, Ananda, is transitory by nature . . . objects . . . tongue . . . mind is transitory by nature, mind-states, mind consciousness, mind-contact, whatsoever weal or woe or neutral state experienced arises owing to mind-contact — that also is transitory by nature. What is thus transitory, Ananda, is called ‘*the world*’ in the Ariyan discipline.”<sup>xiv</sup>

Through the above suttas we can see what is meant by “*the world*” the way it is perceived by the Buddha. And we can see the truth of “*the world*”

in our own experience, to confirm for ourselves the truths which the Buddha was teaching. The world of conditioned realities is real. When we see, there is the world of colors, because in reality what we initially see is only color experienced through eyes. When we hear there is the world of sound experienced through the ear. When we feel a touch on the body, there is the world of bodily feeling experienced through the body. When we think, there is the world of thought experienced through the mind. This holds true for the world of smell experienced through the nose and the world of taste experienced through the tongue.

Why is it important to be mindful of the different conditioned realities as they appear one at a time? If there can be mindfulness (*sati*) of the conditioned realities as they appear one at a time through the six doorways, the tendency to take them for permanent entities, or for self, will be decreased. When we think that we see a “person,” what is it that appears through the eyes? What appears through the eyes is only a visible object, not a person. ‘Person’ is a concept which we have affixed to the object to give it meaning. It is not the object itself.

When a visible object (*rupa*) appears, there is also “seeing” (*nama*) which experiences the visible object, otherwise the visible object cannot appear. The “seeing” is merely a reflexive action, a conditioned phenomena. It is not a person who sees, not a “self.” It can only experience the visible object. The same holds true for the other senses. A visible object should be realized and also “seen”; the experience of a visible object should be realized. A visible object is not the same as the experience of it; they are different conditioned phenomena. If “seeing” is not known as it really is, we are bound to take “seeing” for self.

A visible object can be experienced only through the eye-door, not through any other doorway (sense organ). A visible object cannot be touched.

We may think we can touch a visible object, but when there is “touching,” what appears? It may be hardness, softness, heat, cold, motion, or pressure.

A visible object, that which appears through the eye door, cannot be touched, it can only be seen. When a visible object is touched it becomes a tangible object appearing through the body-sense door, provoking a completely different experience from that of a visible object. “Seeing” and “touching” cannot occur at the same time; they occur one at a time, at different moments.

It is the elements of mind which connect the two experiences to relate to a specific object, but again that process of *nama* is another series of different conditioned realities arising and falling away one at a time; it is not “self.”

When we touch a table it is not the table which appears, but a tangible object or an experience of hardness, etc. At that moment hardness appears, there is only hardness and the experience of hardness; there is no table in hardness, there is no “self” in hardness. If the *rupa* which appears is not realized as it is (as only being *rupa*, not “self”) one is bound to take it for “self,” clinging to it as happening to him.

We may think of the concept ‘table,’ but thinking and formulating concepts is a different conditioned phenomena altogether from that of hardness and the experience of hardness, or any other attributes of matter.

If there is no mindfulness of the characteristics of *nama* (feeling, perceptions, thinking, mental moods, and consciousness itself) as they arise one at a time, we fall into the delusion of a “self” which experiences *rupa* arising through the body senses — eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body (skin). *Nama* arises only through the mind-door. All elements of *nama* are conditioned and not “self.” If one still thinks it is “I” who experiences these phenomena of matter and mind, he has still not developed any insight.

*Sati*, or mindfulness, is the conditioned mental factor which is aware or mindful of the different “realities” appearing one at a time. *Sati* is aware of the characteristics of hardness, softness, heat, cold, pressure, motion; it is aware of visible object, sound, odor, flavor, and texture as they appear through the body-senses. *Sati* is aware of mental states such as greed, sense



desire, ill will, anger, excitement, depression, pride, stinginess, jealousy, etc., as they arise through the mind-door. *Sati* again is only a conditioned mental factor, conditioned by our hearing about “right mindfulness.” When one has listened to Dhamma and has heard about *Sati*, there will be more remembrance of it. In this way *Sati* can arise and it can be developed.

It is the conditioned mental factor *pañña*, or wisdom, which experiences the objects of *sati* as not “self” (estranged from being the owner of them). *Sati* must be practiced and accumulated for a long time before *pañña* can experience the five aggregates of clinging as they arise, as being not “self.” If *sati*, which is aware of the characteristics of *rupa* and *nama*, has not been greatly established so that it arises very frequently no matter where we are or what we are doing, we cannot expect that *pañña* can realize the objects of *sati* as being not “self” (which appears in actual experience as a complete non-association with the phenomena). If there is no *sati*, at that moment there can neither be *pañña*.

These two, *sati* and *pañña*, again are mental factors (*sankharas*) which are not “self,” and they arise only because they have been cultivated and developed, not otherwise. If we confuse them with being “self,” or suppose that some “One” is performing actions, or if we think “It is just ‘my’ mind,” there is again no real *pañña*, only erroneous thinking and delusion. Only in the short moment of *sati* does *pañña* have the opportunity to know *rupa* or *nama* more distinctly as they really are, as not “self.” If we realize that the short moment (each individual arising) of *sati* is the only opportunity for *pañña* to become keener, then there will be more *sati* and it will accumulate. Then the notion of a “self” or “I” which is experiencing those phenomena will wear away and be eliminated from consciousness. It will be understood that it is *sati* and *pañña*, both mental factors, not a “person” or “I” that is aware of, and realizes, the characteristics of *rupa* and *nama* as they arise, as impermanent, suffering, and not “self.”

We must learn to distinguish each characteristic, or *rupa* and *nama*, as they arise, but we should not look for them or strain to be “aware.” When they arise we should just be aware of them. If there is searching out, or

waiting for them to arise with the desire to catch them in order to gain insight, then that must also be realized as another type of *nama*, and not seeing the phenomena as they are. All kinds of *rupa* and *nama*, even the effort to be aware, or doubt about the value of this practice, or the desire to gain something (i.e., Enlightenment) should be realized, as they arise, as not “self.”



It is not enough to be aware of only *rupa* and not *nama*, or only *nama* and not *rupa*, or to be aware of only one aspect of *nama* or *rupa* and exclude the others, or to set aside only an hour or two in a day for *sati* and *pañña*. The characteristics of all aspects of *rupa* and *nama* must be known and realized as and when they appear. For example, while walking, if one pays attention only to the characteristics of motion of his legs, he will not be aware of other aspects of *rupa*, such as pressure and hardness, or visible objects and sounds, or of the *nama* which perceives, remembers (*sañña*), and “thinks about,” and which experiences *rupa*. As a part of the total experience, is it not true that pleasant or unpleasant sensations (*nama*) also appear, as well as mental formations, such as sense desire, aversion, jealousy, conceit, happiness, kindness, or depression, and so forth? If we try to limit the form, conditioned phenomena cannot appear as they really are. Characteristics of *rupa* and *nama* are appearing and falling away all the time, and all that has to be done is to just notice them without trying to do anything special.

Only in fully knowing and comprehending (as not “self”) all the conditioned phenomena which present themselves through the six doorways now, at the present moment, can ignorance and the defilements be eradicated. We can only eradicate the cankers of greed, hatred, and ignorance when they appear, not allowing them to overwhelm us by influencing our thought, speech, and actions.

We may know the truth in theory, but until *pañña* is developed to the degree that it can realize directly and intuitively the Truth of “not self,” we will never be able to fully understand and appreciate the Buddha’s Teaching, nor gain from it the fruits with which practice of the Buddha-

dhamma rewards us. If by *sati* and *pañña* we could realize the arising and passing away of *rupa* and *nama* as they appear here and now through the six doors, there would be more detachment from those conditioned phenomena. We would not erroneously see and regard them as carrying any quality of “mine” or “myself” in them. In that way we could free ourselves from their intoxicating and overpowering, binding influence in our daily lives. If we listen to the Teachings of the Awakened One without awareness, there will be intellectual knowledge, but no detachment. Disenchantment, dispassion, and detachment from the five aggregates of clinging and grasping, here and now, are for the destruction of suffering and for the realization of that unconditioned reality we call Nibbana.

## **INSIGHT KNOWLEDGES<sup>xv</sup>**

In the traditional development of insight, which leads to the realization of Nibbana, there are eight knowledges, or stages, which are cultivated and developed, one leading to the next. The last stage is followed by what is called Conformity and Change of lineage, which is the actual experience of Nibbana.

The eight are: knowledge of rise and fall, knowledge of dissolution, appearance as terror, appearance as danger, knowledge of dispassion, desire for deliverance, contemplation of reflection, and equanimity of formations.

The first insight knowledge is developed by attuning one’s awareness to the rise and fall of the material and mental phenomena happening in each moment of sense experience. The meditator discerns both the arising of the material sense stimulus (sight, sound, odor, flavor, or touch) and of the consciousness that is aware of it. He perceives them arising simultaneously, as it were, and he perceives the immediate falling away or vanishing of both the material stimulus and the consciousness of it.

At first seeing the arising and falling away of the material stimulus will be the most apparent because it is the more gross. Discerning consciousness as it arises and vanishes is more subtle, more difficult, but by giving special

attention to it and at least trying to see it happening like this, gradually it becomes clearer and clearer as our attention and awareness (*sati*) becomes quicker and keener.

The meditator repeatedly cultivates his awareness in this way, and he begins to see the five aggregates, the material stimuli, and the mind which experiences them in their three characteristic marks of impermanence unsatisfactory-ness or pain, and not-self. The characteristics fail to become apparent when something is not given special attention because they are concealed by our delusion, craving, and attachment. However, when continuity is disrupted by the discerning of rise and fall, the characteristic of impermanence becomes apparent in its true nature. When impermanence is clearly seen, then one also sees the unsatisfactory and painful nature inherent in the aggregates, stimuli, and mind because he sees there is nothing to hold on to or to call “I” or “mine.” The mark of no-self becomes apparent when body and mind are seen as being just impersonal, conditioned elements and processes.

When the meditator repeatedly observes in this way, with insight free from disturbances and steady on its course, examining and experiencing the material and mental states, then if his insight (*sati*) works keenly, the rising and falling formations quickly become apparent. When his knowledge works keenly and formations quickly become apparent, he no longer extends his mindfulness to their arising or presence, occurrence or sign, but he brings his acute awareness to bear only on their falling or disappearance, their vanishing. When insight knowledge has arisen in him so that he sees how the whole field of formations (*nama-rupa*) are continuously vanishing, ceasing, and dissolving, that is called the stage of Contemplation of Dissolution.

The meditator continues contemplating the dissolution of the formations from moment to moment, and the three characteristics at that stage become quite apparent. They appear vividly as continually changing and fleeting, not lasting more than a brief moment, and he abandons the perception of permanence and solidity. The formations are evident as being unsatisfactory

and painful, and he abandons the perception of satisfactoriness and pleasantness. And seeing their conditioned and uncontrollable nature he abandons the perception of a “self” or “I” that owns them. He becomes dispassionate, he abandons delight in those formations, he abandons greed, he abandons originating, and he abandons grasping.

While contemplating dissolution in that way, he succeeds in making formations (the five aggregates) appear as bold, as empty, and as vain. Hence the ancients said:

*Aggregates cease and nothing else exists.  
Break-up of them [at each moment] is known as death.  
He watches their destruction [vanishing] steadfastly,  
As one who with a diamond drills a gem.*

He views them with detachment as they keep on breaking up, like fragile pottery being smashed, like sesame seeds being roasted, like bubbles rising to the surface of water, only to burst as soon as they appear.

As the meditator repeats and develops in this way the contemplations of dissolution, he sees how past formations have ceased, present ones are ceasing, and those that will arise in the future will also cease in just the same way. Then what is called the Knowledge of Appearance as Terror arises in him at this stage. But this Appearance as Terror itself does not fear, for it is simply the acknowledgment that past formations have ceased, present ones are ceasing, and future ones will also cease: that is merely their nature, just as a man with eyes, looking at three glowing red charcoal pits at a city gate, is not himself afraid since he only forms the judgment that all who fall into them will suffer great pain or death. But it is called Appearance as Terror because formations in all kinds of becoming, generation, destiny, station, or abode are fearful of being bound for destruction. There is nothing to hold unto, and so they appear as terror, or unsatisfactory. That is nothing more than a skillful means employed to induce the mind to relinquish attachment and grasping.

As he continues, the meditator begins to realize that there is no asylum, no shelter, no place to go, no refuge in any kind of becoming . . . . There is not a single formation, including his “I” which he can seize or upon which he can place his hopes. And, just as a man is frightened and horrified, and his hair stands up when he comes upon a thicket infested by wild beasts, and he sees it as nothing but danger, so too, when all the formations have appeared as Terror by Contemplation of Dissolution, the meditator sees them utterly destitute of any core or any satisfaction, promising nothing but danger. That is called the Knowledge of Appearance as Danger.

When the knowledges of dissolution, terror, and danger have become strong, then the meditator should reflect in the following way. “Knowledge of the state of peace (Nibbana) is this: Arising is danger, non-arising is safety (Nibbana); occurrence is danger, nonoccurrence is safety; despair is danger, non-despair is safety; becoming is danger, non-becoming is safety; grasping is danger, non-grasping is safety; craving is danger, non-craving is safety; ignorance is danger, wisdom is safety,” and so forth.

When skilled in those two kinds of knowledge, Knowledge as Danger and Knowledge of the State of Peace, then the various views will not shake him; he does not vacillate about views that occur, such as “The ultimate Nibbana is here and now.” The rest is clear.

When the meditator sees all formations in these ways he becomes weary of them, he becomes dispassionate towards, is dissatisfied with, and takes no delight in the manifold field of formations belonging to any kind of becoming . . . .

Just as a golden swan that loves the foothills of the snow clad mountains and loves to swim in the crystal clear waters of the seven lakes, delights not in a filthy mud-puddle at the gate of a village of outcasts; or just as a lion, king of beasts, finds delight at roaming free in the Himalayas with its three thousand leagues extent, but delights not when put into a gold cage in the zoo; so too this meditator/swan finds delight not in any formation, but only in the state of peace seen in the way beginning: “Non-arising is safety . . .

and his mind tends, inclines, and leans toward that.” That is the Knowledge of Contemplation of Dispassion.

Now, as this is developed, the mind of the meditator is no longer attracted to, or fastened onto formations, and he becomes desirous of being delivered from the whole field of formations and escaping from it. Just as a fish in a net, a frog in a snake’s jaws, a deer caught in a snare, a jungle fowl shut in a cage, an elephant stuck fast in a great bog are desirous of being delivered from, of being free from those traps, those dangers, so too, the meditator’s mind is desirous of being free of the whole field of formations. That is called the Knowledge of the Desire for Deliverance.

Being thus desirous of deliverance, the meditator again reflects upon the three characteristics of those formations which are still dissolving in front of his detached awareness. He sees all formations as impermanent, fleeting away, unstable, limited, and disintegrating. Because of that he sees them as unsatisfactory, painful, unreliable, a source of confusion and frustration, hard to bear, Mara’s bait, subject to birth and death. He sees them as not self because they are alien, empty, ownerless, uncontrollable, vain, void, insubstantial, and so on. But why does he discern them in this way? He does so in order to contrive the means to deliverance. For if one is still taking them for permanent, pleasurable, and substantial, from an ego-centered standpoint of attachment and craving, then he will continue to be oppressed by them, forever in bondage. That is called the Knowledge of Contemplation of Reflection.

When the meditator has discerned the five aggregates by attributing the three characteristics to them and seeing them void in this way, he abandons both terror and delight, he becomes indifferent to them, and neutral. He neither takes them as “I” nor as “mine.” He is like a man who has divorced his wife. When he knows and sees thus, his heart retreats, retracts, and recoils from the three kinds of becoming, the four kinds of generation, the five kinds of destiny, the seven states of consciousness, and the nine abodes of beings; his heart no longer goes out to them. In this way there arises in him what is called Knowledge of Equanimity of Formations. As he repeats,

cultivates, and develops that Equanimity of Formations his faith becomes more resolute, his energy better balanced and exerted, his mindfulness better established, his mind better concentrated and composed, while his equanimity about formations grows more refined.

Now, when the meditator has reached this stage, his insight has reached its culmination and leads to conformity, change of lineage, and emergence (the experience of Nibbana). If this knowledge sees Nibbana, the state of peace, as peaceful, it rejects the occurrence of all formations (conformity) and enters only into Nibbana (change of lineage and emergence). If it does not see Nibbana as peaceful, if it is not mature enough, then it occurs again and again with the dissolving formations as its object. It is like the land-finding crow used in the old days to find land. Sailors would let the bird go from the ship and if it sighted land it would fly straight in that direction; if not, it returned to the ship and alighted on the masthead. So too, if Equanimity of Formations sees Nibbana as peaceful, it rejects the formations and enters only into Nibbana. If it does not see it, it occurs again and again with formations as its object until it is ready.

Here is a simile to explain this insight leading to emergence and the kinds of knowledge that precede and follow it.

Once upon a time there was a bat that alighted on a madhuka tree with five branches, thinking: “I shall find flowers or fruits here.” She investigated one branch but saw no flowers or fruits worth taking. And, as with the first, so, too, she tried the second, the third, the fourth, and the fifth, but saw nothing. She thought: “This tree is barren. There is nothing worth taking here.” So she lost interest in the tree. She climbed up on a straight branch and, poking her head through a gap in the foliage, she looked upwards, flew into the air, and alighted on another tree.

Herein, the meditator should be regarded as like the bat. The aggregates are like the madhuka tree with the five branches. Taking them for self or “I” is like the bat’s alighting on the tree. His comprehending the material aggregate and the four mental aggregates and finding them empty and void



of self, seeing the three characteristic marks, is like the bat's investigating the branches and finding nothing there worth taking. His triple knowledge of dispassion, desire for deliverance, and equanimity towards the five aggregates is like the bat thinking: "This tree is barren; nothing worth taking here — a waste of time," and losing interest. His conformity knowledge is like her climbing up the straight branch. His change-of-lineage knowledge is like her poking her head out and looking upwards. His path or emergence knowledge is like her flying up into the air. His fruition knowledge is like her alighting on a different tree.

As soon as conformity knowledge has arisen and dispels the thick murk that hides the truth, change-of-lineage knowledge arises in him, which takes as its object the sign-less, no-occurrence, no-formation, cessation, Nibbana. This passes out of the lineage, the category, the plane of the ordinary and enters the lineage, the category, the plane of the Noble Ones, which is the culminating peak of insight, which is irrevocable. It overcomes the arising, the occurrence, the sign of formations externally and internally (the mental defilements), thus it is change-of-lineage. It enters into non-arising, non-occurrence, and non-despair, thus it is change-of-lineage. It enters into the sign-less cessation, Nibbana, thus it is change-of-lineage.

## **AN INSIGHT MEDITATION EXERCISE**

The following meditation exercise is given for those who may not already be practicing a form of meditation, or do not have the guidance of a teacher, or who may just want to see what this is all about. For it is only through actually tuning one's awareness to the present moment of experience that insight and direct knowledge gradually unfolds. Re-read and become familiar with the previous section on insight knowledges.

For beginners it is helpful to find a place to sit where it is fairly quiet and comfortable. Sit with the back and head straight but relaxed, not rigid. Place the hands comfortably in the lap and gently close the eyes.

You can begin by taking a few rounds of deep, slow, in and out breaths, feeling the movement. Then discontinue the controlled breathing and let it settle into its natural rhythm.

Let go of desiring to experience or identify with anything in the world. Cast out all habitual thinking about events concerning the past, present, or future. Abandon all anger and ill will over which you may have been brooding, and which might still be festering in-side.

Now develop and feel a genuine loving kindness and compassion for all living beings, wishing them happiness and freedom from their sorrows. Wish that people could live in harmony, without contention and desire to dominate, to abiding happily and peacefully in the “blissful wisdom-knowledge” of our true nature.

These are preparatory reflections which help the mind feels what it is about to do and quiet the “monkey-mind” to some extent by setting it free from the day’s activities and the pent-up emotions which may be boiling within.

You can take a few more deep, slow breaths if you like, but then let your breathing come back to its natural course. Now just focus your awareness on the sitting posture, noticing how the body is placed. Spend a few minutes just letting awareness move through the body, starting where the buttocks touch the floor, just feeling the hardness or softness of that contact. Then let awareness move through the legs, feeling the way they are bent, where they touch the floor, the touch of the clothes on the skin, and so on, and slowly let the awareness come all the way up through the body, just feeling all of it, letting the different sensations come and go. When you arrive at the face area, notice where the lips touch together, feel the wetness or the dryness, the softness; feel the tongue resting in the mouth; feel the air going in and out of the nostrils; feel the eyelids resting on the eyeballs, feel the eyes in their sockets, and the muscles around them. Really experience these sensations. Feel the hair on the head, where it may touch the ears or back of the neck or shoulders.

Now, from this point on the top of the head, let awareness drift down through the body and become note the general outline of the entire sitting posture in an attitude of “overseeing,” as if the awareness were resting slightly behind the body.

Now tune the awareness into the area of the abdomen and stomach or in the chest and feel the movement of in-breathing and out-breathing in the place where the movement is felt the most clearly. That is important, as this rising-falling movement will be the training device for initially cultivating an attentive and precise awareness (*sati*). Just feel the movement of the in-breathing from beginning to end. Be aware of a pause, if any, and then feel the movement of the out-breathing from beginning to end. Know it by feeling it. Sometimes it is helpful in the beginning to make a mental note of “rising” while the breath is coming in, and a mental note of “falling” while the breath is going out. But if you can keep the awareness close to the movement without the noting, then don’t bother with it. Just be aware of the arising, brief duration, and ceasing of the in-breath, and the arising, brief duration, and ceasing of the out-breath, and keep the outline of the sitting posture in the background.

If the mind wanders away or thinking intrudes, just notice it with bare attention as soon as possible. You can make a note of “thinking, thinking,” as this helps the mind stay more alert, and then simply bring awareness back to the rising-falling and sitting. Don’t be discouraged if the mind wanders a lot or thinking turns into thunder: that will happen. Just do your best to maintain a detached distance and non-personal identification, letting it arise with awareness, but letting it go also as best you can. Keep the awareness close to the rising-falling movement and the posture in the background, not grasping at anything, not pushing anything away.

Keep the whole body soft, eyes relaxed, back erect, head balanced, shoulders loose, in a state of restful alertness, not holding anywhere.

Different sensations will be felt arising and passing away in the body. They come and go like water bubbles; some may persist a little, and if they take your attention then try to feel them changing even while they seem to be lasting. If they cause discomfort or pain, be aware how it affects your mind, and create a gentle, allowing space in which it can happen. Don't fight it; don't tense up. Say to yourself: "Relax, relax." Keep the awareness detached and come back to the rising-falling and the sitting posture.

Sounds may be heard from outside. Just note them with bare attention: "hearing, hearing," It's only sound, no object in the sound. Just let the sound and the hearing blow in and out of the mind as through an open window — no grasping, no pushing away. Gently return to the rising-falling-sitting.

Note just sense stimuli and the awareness of them arising and vanishing through the sense spheres. Try to discern the simultaneous rising of the material stimulus and the consciousness of it, and their vanishing. Develop the first insight knowledge of rise and fall.

Become like an empty house with nobody at home to answer the knocking at the sense-doors; allow only sensitive, detached registering of each visiting stimulus as it arrives, finding no one at home, immediately departing; uninvited it comes, uninvited it goes.

Let the mind lose identification and reaction to the sensory impingements, knowing that in reality there is no "I" to which those experiences belong. Just open up and allow the feeling of "I" and separation fade out of awareness, the whole process simply occurring by itself, coming back periodically to center upon the rising-falling-sitting.

Be aware of the mind's comings and goings: thoughts, ideas, planning, scheming, day-dreaming, restlessness, worrying, boredom, tiredness, sleepiness, doubts, etc. Note them with bare attention knowing, that they are merely transient, empty, conditioned, habitual activities of mind; do not get involved with them. If they are not quickly and precisely noted for what

they are, you will get lost in them. Come back to the rising-falling-sitting for balance.

Observe only the unstained awareness of the sequential moments of sense experience arising-vanishing, arising-vanishing over and over again within this body with its sense organs upon which the entire process is based.

When this contemplation becomes strong, then tune awareness to viewing just the dissolution of the formations and experience the moments of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching, and thinking as vanishing-vanishing-vanishing into the void of mind. See the whole “world” crumble away at incredible speed.

Do not allow the body to slump or the mind to fall into a reverie, but maintain an erect and relaxed posture and an alert, but composed, detached, observing awareness.

Develop the insight knowledges of Appearance as Terror (nothing to hold on to or claim as “me” or “mine”), and Appearance as Danger (because if we identify with, and cling to, these formations only sorrow arises).

See how the clinging mind tries to catch and stop these empty sensory vibrations and how it uses them to build up our whole world of subject-object experience. Realize that all these formations and our whole objectified world, even the individual “I” consciousness, is merely a projection of the deluded mind; it has no concrete, separate reality beyond the mind, but is merely a grand illusion: Mara’s net. Chuckle at it. Don’t let it scare you.

Then reflect on the Knowledge of the State of Peace: non-arising, non-attachment, etc., seeing it as safety, Nibbana. Cultivate the knowledges of dispassion, desire for deliverance, reflection and equanimity.

At this or any point along the way, great peace and bliss may arise. You may imagine colored spots, or brilliant light, or ideas that you’ve attained

Enlightenment. They are merely signs that a certain degree of concentration and insight has developed. Actually they are called the Corruptions of Insight because, if you are attracted and try and hold onto them, then they are like attachment to anything else: disappointing, because they will not last long anyway. You must observe them with detachment, knowing what they are, and let them take their natural course. You don't have to try to make them go away, either, as they will just fade away on their own, allowing you to resume your normal contemplation of rising-falling-sitting.

Another method, or skillful means, to help get the feeling of no-self or emptiness is to view all of the sense experiences as happening in the sky or space, with no body involved at all. View all of the moments of hearing, seeing, touching, thinking, smelling, and tasting, as like shooting stars vanishing into the void of space.

Although the goal in meditation practice is to transcend the mind beyond the thinking and conceptualizing process to the state of non-duality, that is accomplished by “talking itself out of itself,” so to speak.

Try to get the feeling of being in “the eye of a cyclone” where it is perfectly calm and placid, while the outer “self” is whirling about in utter chaos. Remain undisturbed and unaffected by any sensory assaults. Do not even hold on to the idea of being in “the eye of a cyclone,” but let that also utterly fade into the great ocean of non-duality.

Several names which have been given to this state are the “non-abiding” or “non-dwelling” mind, the “homeless mind,” or “mindlessness.” To clear consciousness of any trace of attachment to the mind concept, Zen offers the following advice.

If the mind should wander, do not follow the wandering, and the wandering mind and the following-up mind will by itself disappear. When the mind abides with itself, do not hold on to this abiding, and the abiding mind (the awareness that the mind is in such a state) will by

itself disappear. Thus when the “no-abiding” mind obtains, this is abiding in no-abode.

When you have a clear cognizance of this state of mind, your abiding mind is just abiding and yet not abiding at all in any particular abode to be known as no-abiding. When you have thus a clear insight into the state of consciousness not abiding anywhere (not fixed at any particular object of thought), you are said to have a clear insight into the “original mind.” This is also known as seeing into one’s own being. The mind that has no abode anywhere is no other than the “Buddha-Mind,” which is full of Wisdom and illuminating. It is the absolute present, for it has no abode anywhere in the past, present, or future periods of time.<sup>xvi</sup>

Let the mind expand and merge into the feeling of the UNBORN, UNCONDITIONED, the state before “I-consciousness” and attachment gave birth to the reflex habit patterns of the mind. Let this unborn state of sublime, unadulterated bliss grow and permeate the whole experience, let Nibbana be realized.

These contemplations should be practiced over and over again, at least once or twice a day, preferably in the morning and evening. In that way you will be able to develop this awareness and bring it into the activities of your daily life. That is done by maintaining awareness of whatever you are doing, whether you are sitting, standing, walking, lying down, eating, washing, going to the toilet, talking, thinking, etc. Whatever the body and mind is doing in the present moment, as it happens, you should simply be aware of it, knowing it all to be not-self. Also, whenever possible during the day, come back and feel the rising and falling of the breath for a few moments or longer. That will help bring the other reflections to mind. All of this will help to strengthen the periods of sitting meditation and that will in turn enable you to sustain it in your daily activities. The two types of practice help to strengthen each other.

You might think this is a difficult thing to do. In the beginning it may be so, and it may even seem strange. But when effort is grounded on faith in knowing it can be done, knowing why you are doing it, and the

understanding the benefits it will bring, then the initial resistance and strangeness can be overcome. Then the whole practice of present-moment awareness will gradually unfold and flow freely and effortlessly. In that way the ego and the false notion of “self” fades out of consciousness and all actions and thoughts will manifest from a selfless base grounded in wisdom and compassion. Also many of the body’s aches and pains and other things which used to bother you will be less intense and you will experience a sense of ease and calm pervading your whole life. You will experience the peace and happiness of the spiritual realm of the mind which none of the passing trials and tribulations of the phenomenal world can greatly disrupt, and a whole new attitude toward life will develop.

*This is THE WAY TO PEACE AND HAPPINESS.*

**MAY ALL BEINGS ENTER THE PATH TO  
LIBERATION, ENLIGHTENMENT, AND  
NIBBANA.**





## GLOSSARY OF PALI TERMS

<i>Terms</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
<i>Akusala</i>	Unwholesome, unprofitable, unskillful; pertaining to Kamma motivated by greed (lobha), ignorance (moha). and hatred (dosa) which will bring unpleasant, painful or harmful effects upon the doer in the future.
<i>Anagami</i>	A Non-Returner, the third stage of Buddhist Sainthood. This Ariyan saint will not be reborn again in this world, but will arise in a pure heaven world and there attain final Nibbana.
<i>Anatta</i>	Not-self, ego-less-ness, impersonality, emptiness; this is one of the three characteristic marks (Ti-lakkhana) of conditioned existence, the five aggregates of clinging.
<i>Anicca</i>	Impermanence; another characteristic of conditioned phenomena; that they are in a continuous state of change, flux, transformation, becoming otherwise; constantly arising and passing away, never the same for two consecutive moments, inside or out.
<i>Arahat</i>	Arahant or Arhat; a worthy one, perfect saint. The last stage of sainthood. The Arahat has destroyed all ten fetters of defilements which bind him to the wheel of birth and death, all substrate for rebirth. He has attained or realized full Nibbana (Parinibbana), or Deathlessness (Amata).
<i>Ariya Magga</i>	The Noble Path; this refers to the four stages of sainthood, or holiness. It begins with the first direct experience of Nibbana, or stream-entry (sotapatti) and progresses through the destruction of the ten fetters to Arahantship.
<i>Ariyan</i>	The Noble One; one who has entered upon the Ariya-Magga (q.v.) and has become a Noble Person (Ariya-Puggala): Sotapanna, Sakadagami, Anagami, or Arahat.
<i>Ariya-Sacca</i>	The Noble Truth, referring to the Four Noble Truths: Dukkha-Sacca, the truth of suffering; Dukkha-Samudaya-Sacca, the truth of the arising of suffering; Dukkha-Nirodha-Sacca, the truth of the cessation of suffering; Dukkha-Nirodha-Gāminī-Patipadā-Sacca, the truth of the Path leading to the cessation of suffering.
<i>Atta</i>	Self, ego, personality; the opposite of anatta.
<i>Avici</i>	The name for the hell of worst suffering in the realms of rebirth.
<i>Avijja</i>	Ignorance, delusion, the state of not knowing; the state of the unenlightened mind. It is grasping things as self (atta); the primary

<i>Terms</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
	root of all evil and suffering in the world; that which veils man's eyes and prevents him from seeing the true nature of things. <i>Avijja</i> is ignorance so profound that it is self-obscuring, turning everything upside down; it makes us believe that what is impermanent is permanent, what is unsatisfactory is satisfactory, what is without self-nature as having self-nature. It makes us think what is wrong is right, what is right is wrong, what is bad (akusala) is good (kusala), what is good is bad. It is not understanding the Four Noble Truths. <i>Avijja</i> is the first factor in the twelve links of interdependent arising (paticca-samuppada). <i>Avijja</i> is also the last of the ten fetters to be broken before Arahantship is attained.
<i>Bhavana</i>	Mental development, or meditation. Buddhist meditation is of two kinds: samatha-bhavana (concentration and tranquility), and vipassana-bhavana (insight meditation, satipatthana).
<i>Bhikkhu</i>	Lit. "scrap gatherer," one who lives on alms; the title of a Buddhist monk.
<i>Bodhi</i>	Supreme, super-mundane knowledge or Wisdom; Awakening, Enlightenment.
<i>Bodhisatta</i>	Sanskrit. Bodhisattva: Lit. Enlightened being, one who has made a vow to become a Buddha, to offer one's life and service to helping others reach Enlightenment.
<i>Buddha</i> <i>Buddhi</i>	One who is awake with supreme Enlightenment (Bodhi). (Sanskrit) The faculty of intellect; a function of the developed mind which enables one to realize or awaken bodhi and become a Buddha. This faculty of buddhi in the minds of most ordinary people does not function, but remains dormant and undeveloped due to the strength of their avijja. It can be awakened and developed through hearing Dhamma and by meditation.
<i>Deva</i>	In Buddhist cosmology, a god or goddess that abides in Devaloka, the heavenly realms of samsaric existence.
<i>Dhamma</i>	(Sanskrit. Dharma) a word having many connotations. A dhamma is anything which exists in the universe. There are two types of dhammas, conditioned (sankhata) and unconditioned (asankhata). The conditioned dhammas are the five aggregates which have the three characteristics of anicca, dukkha and anatta (ti-lakkhana). The one unconditioned Dhamma is Nibbana, the unborn, undying element. The other meaning of Dhamma, the one used most in this book, refers to the religious Teachings which lead to the realization of Absolute Truth, Nibbana, but in particular to the Teachings of

<i>Terms</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
	the Buddha. The Dhamma teachings concern the conditioned Dhammas which, when understood, lead one to realize the unconditioned Dhamma, Nibbana.
<i>Dukkha</i>	Suffering, ill, unsatisfactory-ness is the common understanding. More precisely it refers to the impermanent, unstable (anicca) and “not-self” (anatta) nature of conditioned existence and the five aggregates of clinging. Because beings grasp and cling to the five aggregates as being their “self,” or cling to sense stimuli as being concrete things when in reality they are “empty”, this is the cause of the confusion, sorrow, pain, frustration, and so forth which beings experience. Dukkha on a deeper level refers to duality itself, to the subject-object division which arises in the minds of beings. It is this duality of perception, this “I-consciousness,” which gives rise to clinging, craving, grasping, and becoming and the suffering which accompanies it. Dukkha is the second characteristic of the ti-lakkhana.
<i>Jhana</i>	Mental states of absorbed concentration (appana-samadhi). They are called “pleasant abidings here and now” because of their isolation from all outside disturbances.
<i>Kamma</i>	(Sanskrit: Karma) Volition or action done with intent through body, speech, or thought. Those actions leave an impression in the subconscious life—continuum (bhavanga-sota) capable of producing or manifesting an effect (vipaka) of the same likeness and intensity as that of the kamma performed. Kamma is basically of two natures, akusala and kusala (q. v.), and they produce their unpleasant, painful, or pleasant results respectively. These actions are of the kind which shape the destiny of beings and fuel rebirth. There is also a third type of kamma, but this kind does not produce any result (vipaka), being inoperative (kriya-kamma). That type of kamma is created only by Arahats who no longer perform binding kamma because of the eradication in their minds of all ignorance, greed, and aversion.
<i>Khandha</i>	Aggregate, group, or collection; this pertains to the five aggregates of clinging (pancupadanakkhandha).
<i>Kusala</i>	Wholesome, skillful, profitable; pertaining to kamma motivated by the three wholesome roots: non-greed (alobha), understanding (vijja), and kindness (adosa). These actions produce pleasant and happy results, the opposite of akusala.
<i>Loka</i>	World or realm; referring to the samsaric realms, or planes of

<i>Terms</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
	conditioned existence. There are three main divisions, or lokas, each of which has its own sub-divisions. These begin with (1) kama-loka, the sensuous world of the five physical senses with its sub-divisions: (a) manussa-loka, the world of human beings; (b) peta-loka, the realm of hungry spirits; (c) niraya, the hells constituting the world of animals; and (d) deva-loka, the heavenly worlds of which there are six. The next is (2) rupa-loka, the realm of fine-material form, in which beings have bodies of rainbow, or radiating, light and have only the physical senses of seeing and hearing, being too refined for the more gross senses of smell, taste, and touch. One is reborn there only if he had developed one of the four rupa-jhanas in his previous life. There are said to be sixteen sub-divisions in rupa-loka according to the type of jhana attained. The life-spans in these realms are incredibly long. (3) Arupa-loka are the formless realms, the planes of existence in which exist only the four mental aggregates (nama-khandhas). These realms of mind are attained only by those who had previously perfected the formless absorptions, arupa-jhanas, to wit: the sphere of infinite space, the sphere of infinite consciousness, the sphere of nothingness, and the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception. The span of life in these mental realms is even longer than in the rupa-loka.
<i>Lokuttara</i>	Super-mundane, pertaining to the Ariyan Path and Nibbana. Nibbana is Lokuttara-Dhamma, the unconditioned reality.
<i>Magga</i>	Path or way. The Noble Eightfold Path is the AriyaAttangika-Magga. The Ariyan Magga refers to the stages of sotapanna, sakadagami, anagami, and arahatta, also called LokuttaraMagga.
<i>Moha</i>	Delusion; synonymous with avijja. One of the three evil roots of lobha (greed), dosa (hate), and moha, from which come all unskillful (akusala) actions.
<i>Nibbana</i>	(Sanskrit: Nirvana) Lit., expulsion of all the passions; the extinction of all ten fetters. Some common names given to it are the Unborn, Unconditioned, Non-duality or Supreme Happiness. (See Chapter IV: The Third Noble Truth.)
<i>Nama</i>	Name, mentality, mind; the four aspects of the mental functions, the four mental aggregates (nama-khandhas): feeling, perception, determinations (sankharas), and consciousness. (See Appendix on Sensory Cognition.)
<i>Pañña</i>	(Sanskrit: Prajna) Wisdom or transcendental knowledge;

<i>Terms</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
	penetrating insight; the mental factor which experiences the anicca, dukkha, and anatta nature of the five aggregates. <i>Pañña</i> is developed, or arises, out of mindfulness (sati) in insight meditation (vipassana-bhavana). Sati and <i>Pañña</i> together are the meditator's tools, or mental factors, with which he dispels ignorance, destroys the fetters, and realizes Nibbana.
<i>Parinibbana</i>	Full or completed Nibbana; the state of an Arahant, but more commonly refers to the final death of the Arahant or Buddha, when the aggregates of clinging no longer come together in a new birth; a synonym for Deathlessness (Amata).
<i>Paticca-Samuppada</i>	Dependent Origination; the cycle of twelve interdependent links concerned with the conditioned arising and passing away of all material and mental phenomena, the five aggregates of clinging. It is used to explain how rebirth takes place in the cycle of births and deaths (samsara).
<i>Patisandhi-viññana</i>	Rebirth linking consciousness which, in the process of rebirth, connects the passing life to the next existence in one of the various realms (loka) according to its accumulated Kamma.
<i>Peta</i>	A departed spirit or hungry ghost in one of the lower realms of misery (peta-loka). Rebirth in peta-loka is caused by having been miserly and excessively greedy as a human being. Petas suffer from, among other things, extreme hunger and thirst.
<i>Puthujjana</i>	An ignorant, ordinary worldling; one who is not an Ariyan, who has not experienced Nibbana even briefly, who is still under the bonds of the ten fetters.
<i>Rupa</i>	Form, materiality, shape; consisting of the four primary elements (maha-bhutas) of earth, water, fire, and air. It is the object of experience in the sensory perceptions of color, sound, odor, flavor, and touch.
<i>Sakadagani</i>	Once Returner; the second stage of sainthood (the Ariyan path) from which one will return only once more, at the most, for rebirth, before attaining Parinibbana, Arahantship.
<i>Samadhi</i>	Concentration of mental-composure; lit. to fix one's mind on one point; the mind unwavering, calm, tranquil, and subjectively tranquilized. Samma-samadhi is the eighth factor of the Noble Eightfold Path, one of the seven factors of Enlightenment, and one of the five spiritual powers.
<i>Samatha</i>	Tranquility, serenity; a synonym for samadhi. Samatha-bhavana is the meditation utilizing concentration objects like the breath

<i>Terms</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
Samsara	movement in order to calm activities of the body and the mind, allowing one to enter and abide in the meditative absorptions. Perpetual wandering; the rounds of rebirth; the ocean of birth and death. It also refers to the rise and fall of moment-to-moment sense experiences with grasping and clinging.
<i>Sankhara</i>	A compound, something which is formed, made up, conditioned; that which forms or determines something else. The five aggregates of clinging are sankharas because they are conditioned to arise through ignorance and craving. The aggregates of mental formation, sankhara-khandha, are those mental factors which were formed from past actions and which will determine the way we act in the future under similar situations.
<i>Sañña</i>	Perception: its characteristic is to mark or recognize, to perceive an object's distinctive marks (ie., round, square, blue, red, sweet, sour, etc). If in repeated perception of an object these marks are recognized, sañña functions as memory. One of the five aggregates of clinging is sañña-khandha.
<i>Sati</i>	Mindfulness, awareness, or recollection; a wholesome (kusala) mental factor connected with the development of insight (vipassana) meditation. Sati is aware or mindful of the arising and vanishing moments of mind and matter (nama-rupa) in each sense experience. Sati is a prerequisite for acquiring pañña, the wisdom which sees the emptiness of all phenomena and realizes Nibbana. Samma-sati, Right Mindfulness, is the seventh factor of the Noble Eightfold Path. Sati is also one of the seven factors of Enlightenment and one of the five spiritual powers.
<i>Satipatthana</i>	Foundations of Mindfulness; that to which sati, or mindfulness is directed, to wit: Mindfulness of the body, feelings, mind states, and mental objects — The Four Foundations of Mindfulness as outlined and detailed in the Satipatthana Sutta. The vipassana-bhavana, insight meditation exercises which lead to the developing of insight-wisdom (pañña) culminating in Nibbana, are called Satipatthana.
<i>Sotapanna</i>	Stream-Enterer or Stream-Attainer; one who has attained the first stage of the Ariyan Path; a Noble One (Ariya-Puggala). He has destroyed the first three fetters and is destined to attain Parinibbana within no more than seven lifetimes.
<i>Tanha</i>	Thirst, craving; the chief root of suffering, connected directly to ignorance.

<i>Terms</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
<i>Tathagata</i>	One who has thus gone (rightly attained full Nibbana); Tathagata is an epithet of the Buddha used by him when speaking of himself in the third person. For example, “The Tathagata teaches . . .” instead of saying, “I teach . . .”
<i>Ti-lakkhana</i>	Three marks; the three characteristic or distinguishable marks of all conditioned elements of mind and matter, the five aggregates of clinging. These three are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Impermanence or changeability (anicca)</li><li>2. Un-satisfactory-ness, not something to depend upon (dukkha)</li><li>3. Insubstantiality, without self-nature (anatta)</li></ol>
<i>Vedana</i>	Feeling or sensation of the three kinds: pleasant, painful, and neutral feeling. Vedana-khandha is the aggregate of feelings.
<i>Vijja</i>	Higher or Super-mundane knowledge. Knowledge of the Four Noble Truths, and associated with the realization of Nibbana; the opposite of avijja or moha.
<i>Viññana</i>	Consciousness, specifically of the six senses: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind. Consciousness is the mental activity playing throughout the six-fold sense sphere, making the presence of the six kinds of sense stimuli known. Patisandhi-viññana is the consciousness which arises at the moment of death and re-links into another realm of existence, taking with it all the kammic impressions from the past. Thus it is called “rebirth-linking consciousness.”
<i>Vipassana</i>	Lit. “seeing separately”; it is applied to the system of meditation which uses the satipatthana subjects as its basis for developing awareness (sati) and insight (pañña) into the five aggregates of clinging in order to destroy the ten fetters and realize Nibbana.

**THE WAY TO PEACE AND HAPPINESS**  
**Glossary of Pali Terms**



## ENDNOTES ...

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### Chapter I:

- <sup>i</sup> The reader is encouraged to research the life of the Buddha in other sources, for example, Narada Thera, *The Life of the Buddha*; Hans W. Schumann, *The Historical Buddha*; or Robert Allen Mitchell, *The Buddha, His Life Retold*.*
- <sup>ii</sup> Digest of Majjhima Nikaya 26; (Volume I, pp. 203-209).*
- <sup>iii</sup> This is the Pali term dukkha which, though generally translated as “suffering,” has a more subtle meaning which will become clear as we proceed.*
- <sup>iv</sup> Samyutta Nikaya LVI; (Volume V, pp. 352-400).*
- <sup>v</sup> The space element is not one of the four primary elements (Mahabhutas), but as it is often an object of cognition and grasping, the Buddha included it in this discourse.*
- <sup>vi</sup> Majjhima Nikaya 62; (Volume II, pp. 92-94).*
- <sup>vii</sup> Samyutta Nikaya XXII, §56; (Volume III, p.52).*
- <sup>viii</sup> The Four Nutriments of Life; The Wheel Publication No. 105/106, p. 9 Buddhist Publications Society, Kandy Sri Lanka.*
- <sup>ix</sup> Refer to the Buddhist Abhidhamma (list of psychological) terms for definitions of these words.*
- <sup>x</sup> Majjhima Nikaya 38; (Volume I, pp. 314-315).*
- <sup>xi</sup> Bogoda Premaratne, *The World View of the Buddhist*, Volume I: “All Is Impermanent,” Buddhist Information Center, Colombo, Sri Lanka.*
- <sup>xii</sup> S. K. Ramachandra Rao, *Samkara: A Psychological Study*, Kaayalay Publishers, Mysore, India.*
- <sup>xiii</sup> Digest of Samyutta Nikaya XXXV, §193; (Volume IV, pp. 103-104).*
- <sup>xiv</sup> Précis of the Questions of King Milinda (QKM), Book III, 7, §15; (Volume I, pp. 132-133). The Sacred books of the East series; Edited by Max Mueller; Distributed by Motilal Banarsidass CO. New Delhi, India.*
- <sup>xv</sup> Extract from Majjhima Nikaya 28; (Volume I, pp. 237-238).*
- <sup>xvi</sup> Samyutta Nikaya XXII, §2; (Volume III, pp. 156-157).*
- <sup>xvii</sup> Excerpted from Samyutta Nikaya XXII, §79; (Volume III, pp. 72-74).*
- <sup>xviii</sup> Précis of Visuddhimagga, Volume III, 213, (p. 542).*
- <sup>xix</sup> Extract from and dilation upon Visuddhimagga, Volume III, 220-221, (p. 544).*
- <sup>xx</sup> Rewording of a poem from Samyutta Nikaya XXII, §95; (Volume III, pp. 120-121).*
- <sup>xxi</sup> Samyutta Nikaya. XXII, §93; (Volume III, p. 116).*
- <sup>xxii</sup> Extract from Samyutta Nikaya XXII, §7; (Volume III, pp. 16-17).*
- <sup>xxiii</sup> Samyutta Nikaya XXII, §1; (Volume III, pp. 1-2).*
- <sup>xxiv</sup> Synopsis of Samyutta Nikaya XXII, §59; (Volume III, pp. 59-60).*
- <sup>xxv</sup> Synopsis of Samyutta Nikaya XXII, §18; (Volume III, p. 22).*
- <sup>xxvi</sup> Samyutta Nikaya XII, §61; (Volume III, pp. 65-66).*

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- xxvii* Paraphrase of Samyutta Nikaya XXII, §22; (Volume III, pp. 24-25).  
*xxviii* Samyutta Nikaya XXII, §33; (Volume III, p. 32).  
*xxix* Adapted from Samyutta Nikaya XXII, §26; (Volume III, pp. 27-28).  
*xxx* Précis of Samyutta Nikaya XXII, §28; (Volume III, pp. 29-30).  
*xxxi* Samyutta Nikaya XXII, §53; (Volume III, pp. 45-46).  
*xxxii* Samyutta Nikaya XXII, §1; (Volume III, pp. 155-156).  
*xxxiii* Visuddhimagga, Part III, Chapter XVIII, §32; (pp. 689-690).  
*xxxiv* Visuddhimagga, Part III, Chapter XVIII, §35; (p. 691).  
*xxxv* Visuddhimagga, Part III, Chapter XVIII, §36; (p. 691).  
*xxxvi* Visuddhimagga, Part III, Chapter XVIII, §31; (p. 689).  
*xxxvii* Visuddhimagga, Part III, Chapter XVIII, §28; (p. 688).  
*xxxviii* Visuddhimagga, Volume IV, Chapter XXXV, §205; (pp. 129-130).  
*xxxix* I. B. Homer, *Buddhist Poetry*, Colombo, Sri Lanka.  
*xl* Visuddhimagga, Part III, Chapter XVIII, §29, 30; (pp. 688-689).  
*xli* Digest of Samyutta Nikaya XXII, §56; (Volume III, pp. 50-51).

## Chapter II:

- i* Samyutta Nikaya XV, §1; (Volume II, p. 118).  
*ii* Adapted and elaborated from Majjhima Nikaya 141; (Volume III, pp. 296-297).  
*iii* Extract from Samyutta Nikaya XII, §23; (Volume II, p. 27).  
*iv* Extract from Samyutta Nikaya XII, §20; (Volume II, p. 22).  
*v* Elaboration of Samyutta Nikaya XII, §3; (Volume II, p. 5).  
*vi* Elaboration of Samyutta Nikaya XII, §44; (Volume II, p. 51).  
*vii* Adapted from Samyutta Nikaya XII, §11; (Volume II, p. 8).  
*viii* Excerpted from Samyutta Nikaya XII, §64; (Volume II, pp. 71-72).  
*ix* Synopsis of Samyutta Nikaya XII, §12(2); (Volume II, pp. 9-11).  
*x* Condensed from Samyutta Nikaya XII, §38; (Volume II, p. 45).  
*xi* Amalgamation and condensation of Samyutta Nikaya XII, §52, 53, & 58; (Volume II, pp. 58, 60, and 62).  
*xii* *Digha Nikaya 9 in Sacred Books of the Buddhists*, (Volume II, "Dialogues of the Buddha," pp. 254-255), and in Maurice Walshe, *Thus I Have Heard: The Long Discourses of the Buddha*, (Wisdom Publications, 1987, pp. 164-165).  
*xiii* See Majjhima Nikaya 63, *The Shorter Discourse to Malunkyaputta*, (Volume II, p. 45).  
*xiv* Extract from Samyutta Nikaya LVI, I; Volume V, p. 370).  
*xv* Samyutta Nikaya XII, §18; (Volume II, pp. 17-19)  
*xvi* Samyutta Nikaya XII, §47, (Volume II, p.53).  
*xvii* From 'Universal Light', a small, worm-eaten book found in the library at Hermitage Island, Kandy, Sri Lanka. Author and publication data unknown.

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- xviii* Paraphrase of Samyutta Nikaya XII, §60; (Volume II, p. 64).  
*xix* Condensation of Anguttara Nikaya III, §134; (Volume I, pp. 264-265).  
*xx* Consolidation and elaborated rendition of Samyutta Nikaya XII, §82-93; (Volume II, pp. 93-94).

### Chapter III:

- i* Quoted in the Buddhist Publication Society (B.P.S.) Wheel series #208-211. Anguttara Anthology, p. 12.  
*ii* H. Saddhatissa, the sutta Nipata, p. 5, #61.  
*iii* Dhammapada 1 & 2.  
*iv* Dhammapada 127.  
*v* Précis of Samyutta Nikaya XII, §25; (Volume II, pp. 31-32).  
*vi* See Francis Story, The Case for Rebirth, Wheel Publications, Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, Sri Lanka.  
*vii* For a definitive and lucid explanation of the kinds of kamma and their mode of operations, see Narada Thera, The Buddha and His Teachings, Buddhist Missionary Society, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 1988, p. 367 ff.  
*viii* Majjhima Nikaya 4; (Volume I, pp. 28-29).  
*ix* The Questions of King Milinda, Book II, Chapter 2, §8; (Volume I, pp. 76-77).  
*x* The Questions of King Milinda, Book II, Chapter 2, §1; (Volume I, pp. 63-65).  
*xi* The Questions of King Milinda, Book III, Chapter 5, §5; (Volume I, p. 111).  
*xii* The Questions of King Milinda, Book II, Chapter 2, §6; (Volume I, pp. 71-75).  
*xiii* Extracted from Majjhima Nikaya 13, (Volume I, pp. 110-119).  
*xiv* Anguttara Nikaya III, 4, §33; (Volume I, pp. 117-119).  
*xv* Condensed from Majjhima Nikaya 135; (Volume V, pp. 249-253).  
*xvi* That was a peta [**Peta**: A departed spirit or hungry ghost in one of the lower realms of misery (peta-loka). Rebirth in peta-loka is caused by having been miserly and excessively greedy as a human being. Petas suffer from, among other things, extreme hunger and thirst.] which can be seen only clairvoyantly.  
*xvii* This statement was made regarding the law of cause and effect, and its justness in effecting such results for such actions. The person is the architect of his own fate.  
*xviii* Selected from Samyutta Nikaya XIX, §1 ff.; (Volume II, pp. 169-174).  
*xix* Anguttara Nikaya X, 21, §vi; (Volume V, p. 187).  
*xx* Majjhima Nikaya 7; (Volume I, p. 46).  
*xxi* Adapted from Samyutta Nikaya XX, §2; (volume II, pp. 119, 120, 127, and 128).  
*xxii* Excerpted from Majjhima Nikaya 129; (Volume III, pp. 214-215).  
*xxiii* Excerpted from Samyutta Nikaya XV, §§2-3, 14-19; (Volume II, pp. 119, 120, 127, 128).  
*xxiv* Samyutta Nikaya XV, §§5, 11; (Volume II, pp. 118, 126).

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- xxv* From Majjhima Nikaya 22; (Volume I, p. 182).  
*xxvi* Adaptation of Majjhima Nikaya 8; (Volume I, pp. 56-58).  
*xxvii* Visuddhimagga Part 2, 39; (p 256).

#### **Chapter IV:**

- i* Dhammapada 153, 154.  
*ii* Summary of Samyutta Nikaya XXXV, §§106-112; (Volume IV, pp. 52-55).  
*iii* Précis of Anguttara III, 6, §55; (Volume I, p. 141).  
*iv* Udana 8, 3. [*Udana is included in Khuddaka Nikaya — The Collection of Little texts. (Noted by Dhammavamsa)*]  
*v* Restatement of Anguttara Nikaya III, 4, §32; (Volume I, p. 116).  
*vi* Udana 8, 1 and 2.  
*vii* See the section in the Four Foundations of Mindfulness.  
*viii* Condensed from Samyutta Nikaya XIII, §1; (Volume II, p. 95).  
*ix* Restatement of Samyutta Nikaya LV, Book XI, Chapter 1, (i); (Volume V, pp. 296-297).  
*x* Samyutta Nikaya LV, Book XI, Chapter 2, (vii); (Volume V, p. 318).  
*xi* Samyutta Nikaya LV, Book XI, Chapter 3, (i); (Volume V, pp. 320-321).  
*xii* Condensation of Samyutta Nikaya XXII, §89; (Volume III, pp. 110-111).  
*xiii* Samyutta Nikaya XII, §68; (Volume II, pp. 81-83).  
*xiv* Digest of Majjhima 34; (Volume I, pp. 277-279).  
*xv* Buddhist Publication Society Wheel series #208-211, Anguttara Anthology, pp. 60-61.  
*xvi* Horner, loc. cit. [Latin. Loco citato (in the place cited).]  
*xvii* Iti Vuttaka §44.  
*xviii* Extract from Samyutta Nikaya XLIV, 10, §9; (Volume IV, pp. 279-281).  
*xix* Horner, loc. cit.  
*xx* Digest of Samyutta Nikaya XLIV, 10, §2; Volume IV, pp. 271-272).  
*xxi* Condensed from Samyutta Nikaya II, §26; (Volume I, pp. 85-87).  
*xxii* Paraphrase of Samyutta Nikaya I, §2; (Volume I, p. 3).  
*xxiii* Questions of King Milinda II, 2, §2; (Volume I, pp. 65-66).  
*xxiv* Questions of King Milinda II, 1, §§6-8; (Volume I, pp. 50-51).  
*xxv* Questions of King Milinda IVI, 8, §§61-75; (Volume II, pp. 186-195).  
*xxvi* Udana 2, 1.

#### **Chapter V:**

- i* Samyutta Nikaya XXXVIII, §1; (Volume IV, p. 170).  
*ii* Samyutta Nikaya XLV, Book I, Chapter 1, (iv); Volume V, pp. 4-5).  
*iii* Précis of Samyutta Nikaya LVI, 2, §1; (Volume V, pp. 356-357).

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- iv* Digest of Samyutta Nikaya XII, 7, §65; (Volume II, pp. 74-75).
- v* Digest of Samyutta Nikaya XLV, Book I, Chapter I, (v); (Volume V, p. 6).
- vi* Samyutta Nikaya XLV, Book I, Chapter IV, (iv); (Volume V, p. 22).
- vii* Samyutta Nikaya XLV, Book I, Chapter III, (vii); (Volume V, p. 19).
- viii* Samyutta Nikaya XLV, Book I, Chapter I, (i); (Volume V, p. 32).
- ix* Samyutta Nikaya XLV, Book I, Chapter VI, (ii); (Volume V, p. 37).
- x* Samyutta Nikaya XLV, Book I, Chapter VI, (ix); (Volume V, p. 40).
- xi* Samyutta Nikaya XLV, Book I, Chapter I, (i); (Volume V, pp. 1-2).
- xii* Samyutta Nikaya XLV, Book I, Chapter VI, (x); (Volume V, pp. 40-41).
- xiii* Elaboration of Samyutta Nikaya XLV, Book I, Chapter VIII, (x); (Volume V, p. 50).
- xiv* Restatement of Samyutta Nikaya XXII, §90; (Volume III, pp. 113-114).
- xv* Samyutta Nikaya XLV, Book I, Chapter I, (ix); (Volume V, pp. 9-10).
- xvi* Taken from Anguttara Nikaya III, 7, §61; (Volume I, pp. 157-161).
- xvii* Excerpt from Samyutta Nikaya XLVII, Book III, Chapter II, (ii); (Volume V, pp. 139-140).
- xviii* Excerpt from Samyutta Nikaya XLVII, Book III, Chapter II, (ix); (Volume V, p. 149).
- xix* Rewording of Anguttara Nikaya I, Chapter XXI; Volume I, p. 39).
- xx* Majjhima Nikaya 10; (Volume I, pp. 70-82).
- xxi* Majjhima Nikaya 28; (Volume I, p. 236).
- xxii* Samyutta Nikaya XLVII, Book III, Chapter III, (x); (Volume V, p. 150).
- xxiii* Condensed from Majjhima Nikaya 10; (Volume I, pp. 75-76).
- xxiv* Samyutta Nikaya XXXVI, Book I, §§1, 2, 12; (Volume IV, pp. 136, 146-147).
- xxv* Samyutta Nikaya XXXVI, Book I, §6; (Volume IV, pp. 139-141).
- xxvi* Samyutta Nikaya XXXVI, Book I, §26; (Volume IV, pp. 158-159).
- xxvii* Majjhima Nikaya 10; (Volume I, pp. 76-77).
- xxviii* Condensed from Majjhima Nikaya 10; (Volume I, pp. 77-78).
- xxix* Précis of Majjhima Nikaya 39; (Volume I, p. 329).
- xxx* Synopsis of Majjhima Nikaya 10; (Volume I, pp. 78-79).
- xxxi* Synopsis of Majjhima Nikaya 10; (Volume I, pp. 79-80).
- xxxii* Condensed from Majjhima Nikaya 10; (Volume I, pp. 80-81).
- xxxiii* Condensed from Majjhima Nikaya 10; (Volume I, pp. 81-82).
- xxxiv* Condensed from Samyutta Nikaya XLVII, Book III, Chapter I, (iv); Volume V, pp. 123-124).
- xxxv* Samyutta Nikaya XLVII, Book III, Chapter I, (vii); Volume V, p. 127).
- xxxvi* Samyutta Nikaya XLVII, Book III, Chapter I, (vi); Volume V, pp. 125-126).
- xxxvii* Condensed from Majjhima Nikaya 125; (Volume III, pp. 178-180).
- xxxviii* Extracted from Majjhima Nikaya 39; (Volume I, pp. 330-332).
- xxxix* Digest of Majjhima Nikaya 117; (Volume III, pp. 119-120).

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- xl* Majjhima Nikaya 117; (Volume III, p. 114)  
*xli* From Visuddhimagga I, 1, §1; (p. 1).  
*xlii* Visuddhimagga I, 1, §3; (p. 2).  
*xliii* Digha Nikaya 16; (Volume III, pp. 85-86 of Sacred Books of the Buddhists).

### **Chapter VI:**

- i* Paraphrase of Anguttara Nikaya V, 1, §2; (Volume III, p. 2).  
*ii* Restatement of Anguttara Nikaya V, 1, §6; (Volume III, p. 4).  
*iii* Paraphrase of Anguttara Nikaya V, 1, §14; (Volume III, pp.7-8).  
*iv* Questions of King Milinda, II, 1, §§10-14; (Volume I, pp. 54-62).  
*v* Samyutta Nikaya LIV, Book X, Chapter II, §iii; (Volume V, pp. 291-294).  
*vi* Paraphrase of Samyutta Nikaya XLVI, 6, (iii); (Volume V, pp. 95-97).  
*vii* Rendition of Anguttara Nikaya III, 10, §100; (Volume I, p. 236).  
*viii* Rewording of Anguttara Nikaya III, 10, §100; (Volume I, pp. 232-233).  
*ix* Anguttara Nikaya VI, 3, §23; (Volume III, pp. 221-222).  
*x* Anguttara Nikaya VI, 5, §50; (Volume III, p. 256).  
*xi* Restatement of Anguttara Nikaya VI, 5, §45; (Volume III, pp. 249-250).  
*xii* Extract from Anguttara Nikaya VIII, 2, §12; (Volume IV, pp. 125-126).  
*xiii* Samyutta Nikaya XXXV, 4, §203; (Volume IV, pp. 121-124).  
*xiv* Rewording of Samyutta Nikaya XXXV, §199; (Volume IV, pp. 112-113).  
*xv* Condensed from Samyutta Nikaya XXXV, §200; (Volume IV, pp. 113-116).  
*xvi* Rewording of Anguttara Nikaya VIII, Chapter I, §5; (Volume IV, pp. 107-108).  
*xvii* Samyutta Nikaya XXXV, §206; (Volume IV, pp. 131-132).  
*xviii* Condensed from Samyutta Nikaya XXXV, §150; (Volume IV, pp. 86-87).  
*xix* Condensed from Anguttara Nikaya IV, Chapter 12, §113; (Volume II, pp. 119-120).  
*xx* Digest of from Samyutta Nikaya XXXV, §152; (Volume IV, pp. 88-89).  
*xxi* Restatement of Samyutta Nikaya XXXV, §190; (Volume IV, pp. 99-101).  
*xxii* Rewording of Samyutta Nikaya XXXV, §191; (Volume IV, pp. 101-102).  
*xxiii* Rewording of Anguttara Nikaya III, §25; (Volume I, pp. 106-107).  
*xxiv* Restatement of Anguttara Nikaya III, §34; (Volume I, pp. 119-121).

### **Chapter VII:**

- i* Excerpt from Majjhima Nikaya 22; (Volume I, p. 172).  
*ii* Quoted from Majjhima Nikaya 22; (Volume I, pp. 211-213).  
*iii* Restatement and condensation of Anguttara Nikaya III, §65; (Volume I, pp. 170-175).  
*iv* Extract from Samyutta Nikaya XXII, §87; (Volume III, pp. 101-103).  
*v* Digha Nikaya 16; (Volume II, pp. 107-108).  
*vi* Digha Nikaya 16; (Volume II, pp. 149-150 & 173).

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*vii* This verse was found in a pamphlet “The Smile of Buddha” by Bhikkhu Kassapa, undated, published in Ceylon.

*viii* Extract from Majjhima Nikaya 38; (Volume I, pp. 321-323).

*ix* Free rendition and summary of Majjhima Nikaya 39; (Volume I, pp. 325-334).

*x* Majjhima Nikaya 30; (Volume I, p. 247).

*xi* Summary of Majjhima Nikaya 24; (Volume I, pp. 187-194).

*xii* Adapted from Majjhima Nikaya 22; (Volume I, pp. 173-174).

### Appendix:

*i* Dhammapada 165.

*ii* Dhammapada 1 and 2.

*iii* Dhammapada 239.

*iv* Bogoda Premaratne, *The World View of the Buddhist*, “All Is Impermanent,” Buddhist Information Center, Colombo, Sri Lanka.

*v* This idea accords with modern day physics, which has discovered that matter is merely energy (See ‘The Tao of Physics’, Fritz Capra), yet the Buddha appears to have intuitively understood this 2,500 years ago.

*vi* S. K. Ramachandra Rao, *Samkara: ‘A Psychological Study’*, Kaayala Publishers, Mysore, India.

*vii* Premaratne, *op. cit.* [*op. cit.*: Latin. *Opere citato* (in the work cited). (Noted by Dhammavamsa)]

*viii* Premaratne, *ibid.* [*ibid.*: Latin. *Ebidem*: In the same place. Used in footnotes and bibliographies to refer to the book, chapter, article, or page cited just before. (Noted by Dhammavamsa)]

*ix* Samyutta Nikaya XXII, §5; (Volume III, 15).

*x* Extract from Samyutta Nikaya XXII; §102; (Volume III, p. 132).

*xi* Rephrasing of Samyutta Nikaya XXII, §27; (Volume III, p. 29).

*xii* Nina Van Gorkam, *Abhindhamma in Daily Life*, Dhamma study Group, Bangkok, Thailand, p. 59. Much of this material is also taken from ‘The Letters from Tokyo and New York’ by the same author.

*xiii* Samyutta Nikaya XXXV, §23; (Volume IV, p.8).

*xiv* Samyutta Nikaya XXXV, §84; (Volume IV, pp. 28-29).

*xv* The remainder of this chapter is taken from *Visuddhimagga*, Chapters XXI and XXII, selected and rearranged to make it short and concise.

*xvi* D. T. Suzuki, ‘Living by Zen’, Rider & Co., London, 1972, pp. 66-68.